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SYNAGOGUE MUSIC IS DEAD

MICHAEL ISAACSON

Several years ago when I first became involved with synagogue music on a professional basis, I believed that the music which I had grown up hearing was about to go through real change. I was certain that the 19th Century romanticism of Sulzer, Lewandowski and Dunajewsky had had its day and newer music that spoke to 20th Century needs was to replace it. Freed, Weiner, Binder, and Fromm had made the transition and young American trained composers like Adler, Bernstein, Foss and Davidson, among others, were experimenting with contemporary sounds for the Synagogue. I, as a young composer took heart in this activity. It was a noble pursuit, I believed, to carry the torch, Affirming the importance of music to the Jewish experience, we in the latter half of the 20th Century were to forge new musical paths in the contemporary worship experience. It was an optimistic period : The old order changing, yielding to the new.

In 1975, only twenty-five years before the 21st Century the momentum has died, the optimism is gone. The young have grown old and dreams of the future have been replaced by nostalgia for the past. What has happened to synagogue music? It has died. Who killed it? Anti-Semites? Secularists? No. Tragically, the music and perhaps the Synagogue itself has been killed by the Sentimentalists. The older establishment of Institutional Jewry who have chosen to forget the sham and impoverishment of the past, who are getting too old and tired to confront the present and resort to fanciful trips of nostalgia to justify their twilight years. The reason these Sentimentalists are so influential today is that for the most part they are the ones who support the religious establishment. To their credit they do pay the synagogue's bills and they do sustain the religious institutes and seminaries. But let us not delude ourselves, they are ultimately dealing with present and future challenges by retreating into a sentimental past that, indeed, never really existed. Ironically, their concern for the preservation of Judaism and its music is destructive.

After Ph.D. studies in composition with Samuel Adler at the Eastman School of Music, Michael Isaacson was appointed Music Director of The Temple in Cleveland, Ohio. Quickly gaining a reputation as a serious composer, Isaacson is also the youngest composer of regularly published and performed synagogue music. He is a frequent contributor to this Journal and lectures throughout the United States on aspects of Jewish music.

Does all this sound paranoid ? Look at the musical indications.

Firstly, as a composer, it is no longer prudent to be associated with Jewish music. There is less than a handful of composers writing now for the Synagogue, and most of them are in their sixties. If their music is published by the one remaining Jewish music publishing house, the plates must be paid for by private subsidy. This same publisher does little to promote the music because of the massive use of unlawful copying which precludes the possibility of volume sales. Secondly, the frenzy over congregational participation has discouraged the serious professional composer and encouraged every congregation's amateur folk singer. Everyone is a composer today and the result is no one is.

Thirdly, our American cantorial schools are not providing innovative leadership. The musical training is substandard, the values advocated are weary rehashings of what has happened for over one-hundred years and the result is the graduation of young cantors who think and sing like those who are about to retire. Don't misunderstand. The art of the cantor given Synagogue music that is fresh and vibrant is irreplaceable. However, nothing is more pathetic than a young "Shaliach Tsibur" trying to represent his flock before God with sounds that are no longer remotely meaningful to his congregation; it is an ego trip of the worst kind.

Finally, consider the bizarre interest of late in hassidic niggunim. In 1975, American Conservative and Reform Jews who live in sophisticated suburbs, read the latest books, see the newest movies, have the most intricate audio equipment, quote the current philosophers with a craving for relevance, are singing 18th and 19th Century reworked Polish and Lithuanian ditties in their worship services as though they had been brought up all their lives under the tutelage of the Modzitzer Rebbe. Fantastic !!

Why bother? If Jews themselves are "Uncle Tom"-ing it, their message is blatant. "We have found nothing to hold onto in the music of this century-Regress is our most important product".

I recently asked an outstanding composer and conductor who has written much Jewish music to lend his name to a competition to find new young Jewish composers. His reply was that he didn't know what good his involvement would bring. The leaders of the past have grown old. There are too few younger composers writing in this genre today and no one is encouraging them. Their prospective audiences don't really want the commodity they can offer. They can't publish in a meaningful way and they certainly cannot make a

living from composing music for today's Jewry. Does Nationalism still exist? Don't look to Israeli composers. They are trying hard to survive in the non-Jewish cosmopolitan music world. Their Jewishness has less and less to do with the religious experience.

"Why bother yourself lamenting the current state of affairs?", you may ask, "There is enough old music to carry us along for a long time". The answer should be obvious to any enlightened Jew. Music has always mirrored the hopes and aspirations of its people. In this world "standing still" is, in fact, moving backwards, but conscious regression is catapulting decadence. If synagogue music is dying, then it is a good indication that Institutional Judaism is breathing its last as well.

Some might argue that the Synagogue is not a place for relevance; Relevance by definition has transient overtones. "With all the moving around these days some things should remain the same". This defense for inertia is valid if Judaism is founded on the principles of sonambulism. The hard truth, as one pundit has pointed out, is that "constant change is here to stay". Jews as a probing, thinking, "transient" people should know this more than any other group. Either we recreate contemporary meaning from our Jewish traditions and values or we must severely reexamine them.

Perhaps the old must die before the new lives. I, as a synagogue composer, and an informed observer, know that synagogue music has had it. It is dead and those Jews who put more value in the past than in the future are the ones who have killed it.

THE CHALLENGE OF SYNAGOGUE MUSIC: A PERSONAL STATEMENT

ELLIOT B. GERTEL

I am neither a cantor nor a cantor's son, but I do have some thoughts about the present status of American *hazzanut*, and I believe that this is the best forum in which to share them. I do not intend to preach about the importance of piety to the ability of the hazzan to serve as *shaliach tzibbur*, and to interpret the complex traditions of synagogue music. Professor Abraham Heschel, of blessed memory, already communicated this as eloquently and as movingly as possible.' Besides, piety cannot be measured as fairly as the status of hazzanut can be appraised. It is easier to gauge social tastes than to guess individual commitment. The latter can be measured only by God, and indicated, to some extent, by the respect or lack of respect of congregants. Yet the tracing of the religio-cultural interests of a particular age or community yields evidence as decisive as the differences between generations and the gaps between continents.

What distresses me is that while the role of the cantor has acquired unprecedented (and well-deserved) communal stature, while every congregation (even, in ever growing numbers, within the Reform Movement) recognizes the necessity of engaging some human repository of the precious traditions of synagogue music, a cantor trained at some seminary as well as at some school of music—the stature of the *art* of hazzanut is at an all-time low. And our cantorial bodies have not even begun to deal adequately with the problem! At their conventions, they derive fulfillment from learning more and more about a musical heritage concerning which our congregants know (and care) less and less. Forgive me, but the modern cantor may well be the last of a breed which Solomon Schechter described as “spiritual *schnorrers*.”

The problem, as I see it, is that *synagogue music* is subordinated to music *in the synagogue*. The efforts of Bloch, Ephros, Achron, Freed, Binder, and Helfman to develop effective and pleasing harmonies for the oral traditions of East European hazzanut have given way to the Israeli *ruach* song, worn of its effectiveness and even of

Elliot Gertel is currently a student in the Joint Program of the Jewish Theological Seminary and Columbia University. Although only 20 years old he has already published a number of articles in the field of Judaica.

its appeal by years of repetition; to the guitar, the adolescent of all musical instruments if the organ is really to be considered their “grandfather” ; and the Ramah tune, which solves the problem of congregational singing by accumulating what is most trite in the popular sound wherever it may be found—whether on American or Israeli radio, or in the American synagogue or “Hasidic Festival” repertoire. Instead of seeking to raise individuals in a broad and carefully-selected tradition of synagogue music, our congregations are actually narrowing the scope of liturgical music in order to accommodate the sound of a youth cult. The only problem with a youth cult is that a heritage is not mastered until one has offered a part of his youth to it; and no cult is tolerable in the synagogue except that of the God of Israel.

I realize that just as one cannot deify a youth cult, so one cannot apotheosize any tradition of music. Few people require music to lead them to their chosen altars. Music, when carefully utilized, *can* aid men and women to walk with greater dignity and joy to altars that demand of them self-sacrifice and self-scrutiny. And reverent or frivolous use of music always determines, with the greatest subtlety, the altars one truly desires even when he is walking in the direction of the Ark of the Covenant.

Ruth Gay once described synagogue music as too “baroque,” as too much of a hodgepodge of the varying traditions of distant climates and generations.² I think that while her impulse to complain may be correct, her reasons are all wrong. It is true that our services have become much too “topical.” The late Friday evening service in particular (which is gradually becoming extinct) has degenerated somewhat into a series of musical “tokenisms” for the sake of tokenism ; each service must represent a variety of sounds—the traditional *nusach*, the Israeli, the East European, and the Germanic or Sephardic.

A combination of many different modes of sound is not necessarily a cacophany, although it may well be “baroque.” Yet it requires a keen sense of music and a rare (though cultivatable) standard of artistry in order to achieve this properly. I personally am delighted when Lewandowski’s *Mah Tov* (in the style of Giordani’s *Caro mio ben*) is followed by Sephardic *Lekhah Dodi*, then by Secunda’s *Hashkivenu* or *Ahavat Olam* and Rossi’s “On that Day”—especially when these are integrated as beautifully as at Congregation Beth El in Springfield, Massachusetts, the synagogue in which I was raised. I could not help learning to appreciate these different sounds, which are artistically unified by Hazzan Morton Shames.

The congregation has indeed been fortunate to assemble within its choir (of which my father is a member) an impressive group of semi-professional talent, bound together by rare interest and commitment. Shames, who has guided the choir with rare musical acumen was assisted by Robert S. Swan, perhaps the most ingenious and dexterous synagogue organist of our time, until Swan's untimely passing in 1971.³

I was exposed, as well, to the finest synagogue concert material that is available. Hazzan Shames attempts each year to introduce or to revive such masterpieces as Rossi's **Sacred Service**, Secunda's Zemirot and **Welcoming the Sabbath** and **If Not Higher** a cantata, Ellstein's oratorio **Ode to the King of Kings**, Binder's **Passover to Freedom**, the **Sephardic Service**, the moving Israeli collection, **Shabbat Mitzion**, Freed's **Hasidic Service**, and many others in Hebrew, Yiddish and English which not only inspired appreciation of Jewish music, but of all music. Even when some of these "concert" services were presented on Friday evening, they always evoked a sense of wonder and Sabbath joy among our congregants who, while touched and sometimes stunned by these services, were never intimidated nor asphyxiated by them, nor were they entertained or serenaded. Of course there are some services, like Smolover's **Edge of Freedom** and Davidson's **Last Sabbath** (at least with its dance and melodrama) which I feel are not conducive even to the late Friday evening service. Yet I must confess that even when these otherwise impressive works were performed in Springfield, they were presented with dignity and effectiveness. The services I knew in Springfield were "concerts"-but actually concerts **for** God which as an organic **whole** swept the yearnings of the congregants into the progression and movement of the musical offerings. These were chosen by Hazzan Shames in order to spur on the worshipers' initiation into prayer with a simultaneous movement from one mode to another or from one organic composition in a special service to the next.

Hazzan Shames' particular approach is by no means iconoclastic or renegade. It is parallel to the efforts of such creative lights as Samuel Rosenbaum and Charles Davidson. And what's more, it reflects the dominant tendency in modern "Hazzan-Cantor," as opposed to "**haxxan-xoger**" **hazzanut**. This distinction was made by the revered Hazzan Adolph Katchko,⁴ who observed back in 1949 that the **zoger-oistaytsher**, "who created a motif for each separate word," could not find place in America "because in order to appreciate the individually-musically illustrated word, it is essential that the listener understand every word that the hazzan is uttering."⁵ Cantor Shames, like many dedicated and realistic Conservative hazzanim,

found it necessary and natural to **davven** by coordinating a series of sounds into a particular mood while subtly interpreting words. Had he not introduced that approach in Springfield, the words of the liturgy would have become more meaningless to the congregation than their musical embellishments.

Yet because of my father, who is deeply steeped in the traditional East European hazzanut he knew in Poland and in Montreal, and who possesses a fine tenor voice and an uncanny ability to improvise these pieces back into his memory, the art of the **hazzan-zoger** has never been strange to me. And, of course, there are those at Beth El in Springfield who still enjoyed this approach, while they appreciate the superlative creative efforts of Cantor Shames. That is why our congregation is also fortunate to benefit from the talents of Rev. Herman Abramson, its Ritual Director, who is one of the most productive improvisors in East European hazzanut that I have heard, and who sometimes creates fascinating compositions when leading the congregation during summer and other services.

When I came to New York as a student in the Combined Program at Columbia University and the Jewish Theological Seminary, I exposed myself to many different forms of hazzanut, most of them in the **haxxan-zoger** style. I discovered an entirely new dimension in synagogue music, or, rather, I should say that I found an extremely dynamic aspect of an old dimension. This occurred when I visited Temple Anshe Chesed of Manhattan, where I “discovered” Hazzan Charles Bloch, whom I would venture, without the slightest hesitation, to name as the finest interpreter of the **haxxan-zoger** approach that one could hope to find anywhere. If, as it is said, Moshe Koussevitsky modernized the music of Rosenblatt and Israel Shorr, then Bloch has translated for me, by sheer mastery of the vocal and interpretive arts, some very “old” and “remote” sounds into some very moving and dynamic and highly creative avenues of religious expression. Indeed, Cantor Bloch has told me that he regards hazzanut as an aspect of **d'rush**, the **art** and **responsibility** of preaching.

Of course, the congregation of Anshe Chesed, being comprised mainly of retired people, is quite accustomed to (and insistent upon) the zoger tradition, interpreted in modern fashion. It is a tribute to the congregation that even during troublesome years of decline it has maintained an excellent choir-quartet and an ingenious, highly-promising young organist-composer, Jonathan Golden.* With un-

*I predict that some of Golden's compositions, particularly his choral arrangement for Yihyu L'Ratzen (“May the Words”) will become universally well-known in synagogue music.

canny synchronization and spontaneity, Golden directs the organ and choir to enhance even Bloch's most breath-taking moments of improvisational genius, such as his dramatic and poignant version of *Atta Yatxarta* for *Shabbat Rosh Hodesh*. The improvisation of Bloch, Golden and the Choir lend uplifting spontaneity even to the classical compositions of Rappoport, J. Schraeter, Kaminsky, Bazian, Schlossberg, Glantz, Helfman, Vilkomirsky, and others whose works comprise the Cantor's broad and fine "repertoire" of hazzanut. And Bloch's improvisations of the *Birkat Kohanim* and other aspects of the *Musaph* enhance the tradition of *zoger-hazzanut* in the same pulpit which Adolph Katchko himself occupied for twenty-four years.

Just as I find Shames able, by sheer musical artistry and painstaking use of voice and direction, to render the service as a whole into the powerful coalescence of its parts, so I find Bloch, with equal artistry and his chosen emphasis on vocal homiletics, to thread individual cantorial compositions and improvisations of *nusach* into a stunning tapestry around the words of the liturgy (even when interpreting the works of Helfman, Janowski and Dunajewski). I consider it a great privilege to know both of these cantors personally, and therefore to have studied their different philosophies of hazzanut, which I feel complement one another as they have complemented my own understanding of the many traditions-ancient, medieval and modern-which comprise hazzanut, and which provide it with various potentialities of expression and vistas of creativity.

It is not my intention here merely to panegyryze some esteemed friends, or to offer an autobiography of my own personal "musical upbringing" in the synagogue and in the home, which I realize would be boring to anyone but myself. Nor do I intend to propose how to combine the differing approaches of Shames and Bloch. Each has been effective in his **own** milieu, and each is versatile enough to communicate his own artistic and interpretive perspective to a different milieu. And each point of view, while not necessarily exclusive of the other, is independent and authentic because each is built upon the traditional *nusach*. I have digressed because I want to demonstrate how fortunate I have been in being exposed to cantors who not only select their compositions carefully, but are concerned and involved with creativity in synagogue composition in their respective spheres.

In returning to the problem I posed at the beginning of this essay, I would suggest that contemporary hazzanut will legitimate itself as part of a unique tradition of religious expression only when

it asserts itself as a **popularly-understood** form of artistic interpretation which is followed with interest by congregants rather than sung at them ! The contemporary hazzan, whether of the “hazzan-zoger” or “hazzan-cantor” point of view, must first concern himself with actively battling those trends in modern Judaism which would assail the value of hazzanut as art or as religious expression or both. The early Reform Movement, for example, declared that hazzanut cannot possibly be considered an “art” in the Western sense, it being a mere vestige of “primitive” and “oriental” chanting. 6 And this silly proclamation became a platform in America for nearly a century after Sulzer had already proved that traditional **nusach**, in a slightly novel setting, could prove inspiring and pleasing even to the most discerning Gentile ears of Vienna itself !? Indeed, A. Binder has described in sad detail how the most radical triumph of his career was the restoration of some semblance of traditional hazzanut to the American Reform synagogue, whose music had been composed primarily by non-Jewish hymnologists or organists. 8

Within certain Orthodox quarters, such as the Hasidim and the self-styled “elitist” Young Israel circle (founded, by the way, by two Seminary professors, Israel Friedlander and Mordecai Kaplan) there were always attempts to do away with hazzanut in general and with the hazzan in particular. What was questioned then was the religious appropriateness of hazzanut—a grossly unfair indictment in view of even the most excessive theatrics of the “Golden Age of Cantors” back in the twenties (especially since the most acrobatic performers of this era were often the most pious and God-fearing Jews!). In recent years, the modern **havurot** have also questioned the religious appropriateness of an artistic hazzanut. To be sure, the Young Israel and **havurah** groups share a tolerance and sometimes even an enthusiasm for cantorial “concepts” (particularly when performed by the Zamir Chorale), where compositions long chanted as the high-lights of the religious service are applauded after instead of “**davened**” after.

Virtually every “anti-establishment” trend in Judaism (and even some “establishment” leaders, 9 generally rabbis as jealous of their cantors as Saul was of David) has, indeed, entailed a revolt of some kind against hazzanut. This is quite a tribute to the centrality of hazzanut to the Jewish religious service, for has it not always been there to attack and to mock? Hazzanut as a tradition or, rather, as a complex of traditions, each representing a particular approach or climate, has failed—both as an art and as a religious function, for they are inseparable—because there has been no concerted, sus-

tained program whatever in this country to cultivate an appreciation of it on historical, musical and, above all, **religio-artistic** grounds. Why, in some places a cantor with a well-trained voice and well-chosen compositions is looked upon as a liability! Hazzanut has become a professional jargon, a guild, an esoteric art, a mysterious priestly tradition that is sometimes performed but never discussed, that startles people on a weekly basis but is never reconciled **with** them. Little wonder that the vast majority of American Jews-nay, the vast majority of those affiliated with and active in the synagogue -can make neither heads nor tails of it, nor could they distinguish between Rossi and Rosenblatt, Israel Shorr and Sholom Secunda, Dunajewski and Charles Davidson.

The cantor has an immense responsibility, both as an individual and as a member of a cantorial assembly. He must not only lead his congregation in prayer, drawing them into the spirit and letters of the liturgy. He must, by his vocal interpretation and congregational teaching, insure that his congregants appreciate the **compositions** and **composers** which lend movement and melody to the language of prayer. To impart an appreciation for Jewish music is to foster an appreciation for all music written for the synagogue, including Schubert's *Tov L'hodot*, Halevy's *Min Ha-mexar*, and Schoenberg's Kol *Nidre*. (Indeed, certain classical masterworks on Biblical themes, which capture the spirit of Hebrew Scripture, and even adapt local Jewish **nusach**, might well be performed in the synagogue during special music festivals. Handel's *Israel in Egypt* or *Judas Macca-baeus*, or Mendelssohn's *Elijah* are oratorios that immediately come to mind. All of Handel's oratorios on themes of the Hebrew Bible are quite appropriate for the synagogue; parts of Solomon would be particularly suitable as anthems during the dedication of a sanctuary.*)

*Nietzsche correctly observed: "Only in Handel's music there resounded . . . that Jewish-heroic trait which gave a trait of greatness to the Reformation-the Old Testament became music, not the New." This is also true of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. In his careful study of Mendelssohn, Eric Werner pointed out that the piece, "And the Lord passed by. . ." in *Elijah* is based upon the old German-Jewish nusach for "Adonai, Adonai El Rahum . . . which Mendelssohn heard as a child, and which he associated with the Divine Majesty. However, the enthusiasm for Mendelssohn, particularly in Reform temples, has led to a most inappropriate adaptation of pieces from his Christological oratorio, St. **Paul**. Thus, I would consider it entirely out of place to use "God, have mercy upon me, and blot out my transgressions" (#18, "The Conversion," St. Paul) as a synagogue anthem, although this has long been done at New York's Temple Emanu-El. While the words are from Psalm 69, the **composition** depicts Saul's regret for having been a "stiff-necked" Jew.. . .

I do not want to be misunderstood. I am *not* an advocate of the “synagogue center” concept, at least as propounded by Mordecai Kaplan. I do *not* believe that Judaism is a civilization—even a “religious” civilization. Judaism, to be sure, is the religion that preserves the Jewish people, but it is more than just the cement or core of a people. The purpose of the synagogue is not to be a convenient center for the “liberation” of a sub-culture or for the fostering of an elitist or the bolstering of a dominant culture, but to attune the people to the Living Word of God that transcends culture. Judaism, to cite Heschel, is the “art of surpassing civilization.”¹⁰ While the study of Torah is central to the services of which it is a part, there are many times during the course of the week when it is not read. Prayer is the province of the synagogue; in Rabbinic theology, its importance parallels that of the Temple cult.¹¹ The reading of the Torah is intended to stress that Judaism is the interaction of the people with the Word of God and with its classic interpreters. The purpose of the synagogue is to remind us that God, Whose supernal holiness is merely reflected by tradition itself, has revealed Himself to us in love, beckoning and commanding* us to appear before Him. “The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth” (Psalm 145), that is, He is close to each of us—as individuals, as selves, as egos in the most dignified sense. Thus, we may open ourselves unto Him—in petition, in joy, or in praise—aware that God’s work cannot be finished on earth unless we magnify His Name by approaching Him with all that we are, by sharing our yearnings with Him and, above all, by sanctifying our existence with His Torah.

Music can help us to express ourselves in prayer; and it is, I repeat, with the self that we approach Him. Prayer is, as Max Kadushin describes it, a “normal mysticism” where the self is not nullified, but enhanced, by the Divine Presence.¹³ It is only by enabling ourselves to be inspired by the best that cultural traditions have yielded, that we can be moved beyond expressing ourselves as human beings to human beings. We can be carried to open ourselves, however fleetingly, to Him Who abides beyond civilization. To appreciate and to appropriate the best in civilization is to familiarize oneself with its master artists. To be aware of the master artists of synagogue music is to recognize the milieu, the mode, the motion and the mood of a particular composition. Just as no collector really possesses a painting or sculpture unless he knows its origin, so no worshiper can feel that a composition helps him to offer *himself* unless he is aware of the composer. In Europe, from the small Jewish communities of the Middle Ages through the Seitenstetengasse

Tempel of Sulzer, the congregation identified with the composition because it was their hazzan's. Now that cantors are better and better trained in the art of composition-in the practical science of theory and harmony-more congregations should experience that same pleasure of identifying with a cantor-composer. At the very least, they ought to be familiar with the compositions and *nusachot* they hear in the synagogue.

The leaders of the Cantors Assembly have for some time perceived the need to assume the immense responsibility to impart a popular awareness of the classics of Jewish music.¹⁴ With the help of the United Synagogue Book Service, the Cantors Assembly should produce records which anthologize the outstanding cantorial and choral work of the great masters. Thus, a disc might be devoted to Lewandowski, Achron, Ephros, L. Weiner, Dunajewski, Kaminsky, etc. Different cantorial artists could be asked to participate in such an endeavor, with the assistance, if possible, of the composer himself. The Cantors Assembly must labor also to publish literature on the outstanding Jewish composers, with samples of their musical scores and critical, through sympathetic assessment of their art. The illuminating sections on Jewish composers to be found in A. Z. Idelsohn's *Jewish Music* are fine as far as they go, but there are masters who have, thank God, arisen in Israel since the book was written, not to mention those whom Idelsohn himself may have overlooked.

It is equally essential for the Cantors Assembly to do everything conceivably possible, through records and publications and other supportative ventures, to foster appreciation of those great cantors of the past whose voices are still preserved for us. The masters of the "golden age" of hazzanut must never be forgotten-despite the prejudices which prevail about the vocal artists of that age. Their voices must be preserved and their records must be available, especially those discs on which they record their own compositions.

I do not think that my suggestions are impractical, just as I cannot venture to call them revolutionary. It is true that the demand for cantorial music has never been as profound as it could be, as any record dealer will readily confirm. ***Yet much of the blame lies with cantors who have failed to recognize that they are part of a tradition of hazzanut which must be zealously preserved and taught in all of its manifestations if they themselves are to be appreciated both religiously and artistically.*** No cantor is an island unto himself. The most gifted cantors always considered it a sacred duty to preserve and to revise the works of their predecessors. Thus, for example, Moshe Koussevitsky was moved to re-set and to "modernize"

Rosenblatt's expressive composition for "*Ad Henah Azrunu*" (*Nishmat*), as well as Israel Schorr's classic *Yehi Ratzon . . . Sheyiboneh Bet Hamikdash*. To breathe new life into old works is to realize the continuity of the cantorial art which unifies hazzanim with a common heritage and not merely with a common interest.

Hazzanut can become a popular and moving force in the Jewish community. It no longer has to degrade itself by vying with other forms of "entertainment," as the last vestige of "ghetto diversion." Even the finest composers and hazzanim were not entirely free from the cross-cultural trap which is the enshrinement of entertainment as the universal language. It was not difficult for a people who had once been edified (in the profoundest spiritual sense) by the rendition of their liturgy, to exchange the old manner of edification for one over-conscious of "popular" and "folk" sounds. There will always be a strong temptation to mimic the theatrical, rather than the levitical tradition of music. Yet the modern search for authenticity and spontaneity, particularly among young people ; the widespread use of stereo tape recorders and record players ; and the vast numbers of young Jews (in Israel, as well) who receive some extent of musical training in school augur well for the possibility of a renewed interest in hazzanut. Indeed, the very emphasis on spontaneity among young people may well result in revival of *zoger-haxxanut* in some interesting forms. The guidance of cantors will alone determine the artistic and religious value of such attempts.

Too much time has been wasted in arguing whether the religious, folk and operatic sounds of Eastern and Western Europe belong in the synagogue. Everyone must agree that the source of a particular sound is merely secondary to its power to draw out the individual self so that it can stand before the Almighty. Only if a piece of music absolutely embodies for everyone an idea or ideal alien to Judaism, only if its use will prove totally offensive or ludicrous, can it be allowed to rest at the ledge of oblivion. While it is the responsibility of the hymnologist to write everything, and of the musicologist to preserve everything, it is the absolute responsibility of the hazzan to set standards. The question of the chronological and geographical origin of synagogue music is entirely contingent upon the place and standard involved. Precious time and energy should not be spent in arguing over the tastes of the nineteenth century. What must be recalled, however, is that the last century produced many classics in synagogue music because creativity was not a program or a luxury, but a necessity. It was a *kiddush ha-shem*, a sanctification of God's Name, to reaffirm in sound that the God of Israel is also the God

of the West, and to join East and West by reuniting the Western Jew with his God. True, some of these compositions were wholesale imitations of the dominant culture. But, as I have suggested, Judaism is not a civilization but a perspective on civilization. It is, as Heschel taught, “God’s anthropology” interpreted by prophets and sages—and by *hazzanim*. It is no sin against God to be moved by a sound **that** echoes the disciplined musical geniuses of any age. It is a sin-against human creativity and against the Jewish spirit—to ape dominant sounds and to revel flightily in their charm as if Jewish music were a vacuum to be filled.

I have avoided a plea for *nusach* because any cantor worthy of the title has been trained to perceive its centrality to any rendition or regeneration of synagogue music. Both the *hazzan-zoger* and the *hazzan-cantor* approaches can do justice to *nusach*. Abraham Heshel was entirely correct in observing that in Jewish prayer both music and (liturgical) words bear witness to the mystery beyond which God may be found.¹⁶ Yet there has never been any fixed rule about the speed or intonation, the emphasis or technique, of either witness. So long as each word is clearly enunciated, it makes little difference whether the jewels of insight which rest in the words of the *Siddur* are delicately drawn forth in each musical note or organically captured in measures or intervals. Today, there is no radical difference between the approaches. The modern cantor who endeavors to interpret the liturgy with the flavor of the *hazzan-zoger* perceives, no less than his colleague of the other persuasion, that coordination and synchronization of compositions does not necessarily hamper spontaneity. Besides, the same *nusach* and the same compositions (often the classics of Dunajewski, Lewandowski and others) are employed by them both. The difference lies in the emphasis and over-all flavor of the service. There are no grounds here for *halakhic* or cultural arguments which merely detract from a positive program to stimulate interest in the best of all cantorial traditions. Such a program can be achieved through disciplined choice and rendition of compositions. The cantor can begin positive action immediately by urging announcement from the pulpit, or better still, by listing in the bulletin the Sabbath compositions before or after they are rendered. As is well-known, Temple Emanu-El in New York City has long done the latter. Lest anyone believe that congregants will be unable to tell the difference between these compositions, the present writer confesses that he cannot read a note of music, but resents the arrogance of those cantors who would consider him tone deaf for this reason.

Because of our love of synagogue (and other) music, we must confront the painful truth that song is but a rhythmic grunting of the throat by muscular reflex, and that musical composition (like all writing) is but a spaced smear on paper. Everything we produce is constantly perishing ; even our immortality and recognition in this world are a matter of chance. But not all is vanity. The spirit that animates us to preserve what has moved us saves civilization from oblivion and points the way for further avenues of self-expression. It is a relatively short time since we have learned how to preserve the voice. It is sad to consider how many pious and creative cantors in numerous generations, some of whom possessed the most wondrous vocal instruments of their times, will remain unknown to us. We do not even know the composer of the *words* of the Hineni Prayer for Rosh Hashannah, let alone the original *nusach* for it. Why, as recent a masterwork as Mendelssohn's Psalm 100, composed by request of the Hamburg Tempel, is lost to us! I cannot help stressing for one last time that if a composition or recording moves any of us, even if it is vaguely interesting, we owe it to ourselves and to others to preserve it and to give it a hearing. According to Rabbi Joshua ben Levi, "Whosoever reports a thing in the name of him who said it brings deliverance into the world." 17 He who preserves a word brings the world redemption. And he who preserves and teaches a simple *nigun or* a complex composition saves culture for such deliverance.

Hazzanut is the last complex of oral traditions in Judaism, which has yet to be committed into a Talmud-like text of varying, well-notated and equally authentic classical traditions, for which all subsequent compositions will be "commentary." We have not even evolved distinctive "academies" of hazzanut (corresponding, for example, to the different approaches of Rabbi Akibah and Rabbi Ishmael) ;¹⁸ cantorial traditions are still distinguishable only by historical, cultural and stylistic variations.

All of the traditions in Judaism have stemmed from oral traditions-the Biblical, 19 the Prophetic, 12 as well as the various Talmudic, Kabbalistic and Hasidic traditions. The Rabbis delayed the commitment of oral traditions into writing as long as possible.** The Prayer Book itself was committed into writing only in respective responsa of Amram and Saadia Gaon, in response to the wide diffusion of Jewish communities at the beginning of the Middle Ages.** Tradition has always demanded spontaneity-kavvanah (inwardness) as well as *keva* (the universally sacred text) -whether we stand before God

in prayer or perceive his daily communication in the Torah. Tradition has emphasized that holy words live beyond paper and are themselves more far-reaching than any human communications medium."

These cantors and musicologists who have complained about the dearth of adequate notation in the past fail to perceive that upon them falls the most sacred task of modern Judaism: the committing into writing of the last and most aural of all Jewish oral traditions. The only way that this tradition will remain spontaneous and alive is through the education and participation of every Jewish man and woman. Before the sages of music can deliberate, hazzanut must be restored to its rightful place as the only art that can be integrated with sacred words. Ours is a jealous God Who allows us to approach Him with scarcely anything but ourselves. He allots us only our sacred words, so we will not be tongue-tied in His Presence, and our best music, so that we shall be aware of ourselves as the people and the individuals whom He seeks.

NOTES

1. See Abraham Heschel "The Vocation of the Cantor," in *The Insecurity of Freedom* (New York: Schocken, 1972).
2. See Ruth Gay, "Baroque Judaism," *Midstream*, April, 1972, p. 47.
3. On the unusual organ in Springfield's Temple Beth El, see Dr. Swan's article, "Some Reflections on the Design and Use of the Pipe Organ in the Synagogue," *The Journal of Synagogue Music*, April 1970 (vol. 2, no. 4).
4. See Adolph Katchko, "Changing Concepts of Hazzanut" (1949 Convention Address), reprinted in *The Journal of Synagogue Music*, Twenty-Fifth Anniversary issue, April 1972 (vol. 4, nos. 1-2). While, in the present essay, we accept Hazzan Katchko's terminology, we are in fact utilizing his distinction slightly out of context, for he emphasizes the difference in musical conception and we speak of *stylistic* orientation. As we shall remark later, there are, today, many similarities in choice of composition and vocal training among cantors of both tendencies.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
6. See A. Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music in Its Historic Development* (N.Y.: Schocken, 1967), pp. 232 ff. On the tension, during the nineteenth century, between East and West in Jewish ideology, see Arthur Hertzberg's brilliant Introduction to *The Zionist Idea* (New York: Schocken, 1966).

7. See Max Wohlberg, "Solomon Sulzer and the Seitenstettengasse Tempel," *The Journal of Synagogue Music*, April 1970.
8. See A. Binder, "A Perspective on Synagogue Music in America," in ***Studies in Jewish Music: Collected Writings of A. W. Binder***, ed. Irene Hoskes (New York: Bloch, 1971), pp. 278 ff.
9. See, for example, Rabbi Enoch ben Abraham's remark, cited in Jacob Millgram, ***Jewish Worship*** (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971), p 29.
10. See Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom*, p. 250.
11. See Millgram, ***Jewish Worship***, pp. 83 ff.
12. In Rabbinic literature, Exodus 23:25 is interpreted as the commandment to pray.
13. See Max Kadushin, ***Worship and Ethics*** (New York: Bloch, 197). pp. 13 ff.
14. See Samuel Rosenbaum's typically astute observations in "Epitaph for Jewish Music?" (1968). *The Journal of Synagogue Music*, April 1972.
15. See, for example, the records ***Gershon Ephros*** (Tikva, prod. Allen Jacobs) ; ***Choral Masterworks of the Synagogue*** (Westminster, conduc. Hugo Weissgall); and ***New Music for the Synagogue*** (Tikva, Dubrow-Weiner) are fine examples of the anthologization that is (urgently!) required. Of course, records by individual, outstanding hazzanim ought also to be subsidized by our cantorial and synagogal organizations. However, ***it is a sin against the traditions of hazzanut and against simple artistic integrity*** for any cantor to perform on ***such records the public domain works of the great masters without acknowledging the composers.***
16. See Heschel, ***The Insecurity of Freedom***, pp. 246-7.
17. ***Pirke Avot 6: 6.***
18. On the differences between these schools, see A. Heschel, ***Torah Min Hashamayim B'aspaklariah Ha-dorot*** (London: Schocken), vol. I (1962). vol. II (1965). For a socio-economic explanation of the more well-known differences between the schools of Hillel and of Shammai, see Louis Finkelstein, ***The Pharisees: The Sociological Background of their Faith***, third edition (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1966).
19. See Umberto Cassuto, ***Torat Ha-te'udot*** (Jerusalem: Hebrew ***University, 1941***).
20. See Louis Finkelstein, ***New Light From the Prophets*** (London: Vallentine-Mitchell, 1969).
21. See Millgram, pp. 125-126; and Saul Lieberman, "The Publication of the Mishnah," in ***Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*** (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950).
22. See Millgram, pp. 367 ff.
23. See Gershom Scholem's fine essay, "Revelation and Tradition as Religious Categories in Judaism," in ***The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality*** (New York: Schocken, 1972).

AMERICA IN EAST EUROPEAN YIDDISH FOLK SONG

ELEANOR GORDON MLOTEK

The following paper is reprinted from "The Field of Yiddish: Studies in Language, Folklore and Literature," published on the occasion of the Columbia University Bicentennial, Uriel Eisenberg, Editor, and is used with permission of the publisher.

The theme of the paper is a highly interesting one and more than incidentally appropriate to America's bicentennial celebration.
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The Yiddish folksong of Eastern Europe has rarely been utilized to present the attitude of that Jewry to particular social phenomena or single events. There have appeared collections of recruit and soldiers' songs, workers' songs, revolutionary, ghetto and concentration camp songs, but seldom have comprehensive analyses of these followed. Generalizations of the sort: "the life of the Jewish people is reflected in their song," or: "to obtain a glimpse of and to understand the daily problems of the Jews one must know the songs they sang," have been many. As a matter of fact, it was usually the everyday matters that occupied the Jews and were recorded in song (e.g. children's songs and games, work, love, dance, even gambling, and so forth) that were subjected to analysis from time to time. However, such has rarely been the case with songs arising from specific historic events or situations. This is certainly a lapse since, to paraphrase the above generalization, the feelings of individuals, as expressed in song, are in some respects comparable to letters, memoirs, interviews or even autobiographies which have been recognized and accepted as source material for historical or sociological studies.

In undertaking this topic, therefore, I was primarily interested in discovering if, and to what extent, America had been treated in the Yiddish folksong, in view of its historic significance for the Eastern European Jews as the land of immigration. And secondly, I hoped to be able to determine, on the basis of the first, in what light America was regarded. The topic suggested itself, in connection with the tercentenary of Jewish-life in America, as a link between the Jews on either side of the Atlantic. For as the editors of a symposium on Jewish social research expressed it, "... neither can American Jewish life be rightly understood without reference to Central European and Eastern European antecedents and cross-influences."

In order to limit the material to be examined, which was necessitated by space assigned, I chose to restrict myself to Yiddish East European songs that appeared

¹ **H. L. Lurie and Max Weinreich, ed.:** "Jewish Social Research in America: Status and Prospects, **A Symposium,**" *Yivo Annual of Jewish Social Science* 4 (1949), p. 309.

Eleanor (Charm) Mlotek, folklorist, research associate YIVO, author of research papers on Yiddish folk songs and ballads published in YIVO Bleter, field of Yiddish (Columbia University) and others compiler of anthology of folk and art songs, co-author of Pearl Fun *Der Yiddisher Poezie* and co-editor of the weekly page of the Jewish Daily Forward, devoted to Yiddish poetry and song.

in Yiddish folksong collections and to unpublished songs of Eastern Europe that are found in the archives of the Yiddish Scientific Institute-Yivo, and to exclude all songs about America that were born in this country, unless they had been widespread in Eastern Europe before the destruction of Jewish life by the Nazis in World War II and had attained the degree of popularity in indigenous creations.

A collection of songs about America has hitherto never been published. Nor has an index of Yiddish songs ever appeared, although an index for my purpose would not have proved too conclusive either, since songs with mention of America, as I expected, were scattered among the various categories, and allusions to America in a song were not necessarily to be found in its first lines. This meant that the entire inventory of Yiddish songs available in the three aforementioned categories had to be explored.

If we accept the estimate by S. Z. Pipe in 1939¹ of the total number of Yiddish folksongs published up to that time as having been over 2,000, then to date there should be close to three thousand published songs. In the Yivo's unpublished A. Litvin Folksong Collection there are over 300 songs. This means that I have examined about 3,009 songs. Out of these I succeeded in gathering 38 songs with mention of America. Nine songs just carry mention of America with no other import, 3 and 29 songs, in alluding to America, bear connotations that will be presented for analysis.

One reason for this paucity, I would be inclined to believe, is the relative recency, in terms of the folksong, of America's appearance in the ken of the Eastern European Jew. The direct significance that America conveyed to East European Jewry was inchoate with the Jewish mass migration to the United States in 1881. By that time the growing influence of Yiddish literature in East Europe had acted as a deterrent upon anonymous folksong creation. Many folk-like songs of literary origin replaced the anonymous folksong in the repertoire of the East European Jew. By means of publications, the press, traveling folk bards, and the theater, the number of songs was increased and their spread among the communities was hastened. Those songs of traceable authorship were however rejected by folksong compilers, whose rigid definition of a folksong barred the inclusion of any literary compositions. Thus, hundreds of songs originating from the Yiddishfolk poets, E. Tsunzer (Zunser) or M. M. Varshavski, from A. Goldfaden and other playwrights, as well as from the labor poets Morris Rosenfeld, Dovid Edelshtat, Morris Vintshevski and others, which were created in Europe or were transmitted from the United States and dealt with life in this country, were considered unacceptable as authentic folklore material, unless they had undergone thorough transformations. As could be expected, subsequent study nevertheless disclosed the literary derivation of a number of seemingly anonymous songs that were included in the folksong collections. These, particularly the ones describing conditions in America, were altered in the folksong in such a way that they no longer pertained to or mentioned America but reflected the conditions in Europe. Among the folksongs proper, or rather

¹ S. Z. Pipe: [Folklore Songs], Yivo-bleter 14 (1939), p. 350.

² Three variants of songs describing the sinking of the Titanic; three dance songs; two Soviet Yiddish songs; elegy upon the death of Baron de Hirsch.

those of unknown literary origin, this situation also occurred; thus, one song will mention America while variants of it will just refer to a distant land.

Obviously, most of the motives quoted by social historians for Jewish emigration to America reappear in the songs, namely poverty, striving for a better livelihood, persecution, the horrors of military conscription in Czarist Russia, imprisonment, unhappy family life. Furthermore, the persons addressed or referred to in these songs seem to reflect the general attitude of the **singer to America**. Thus, there is implied mistrust and doubt, criticism, hope and praise of America.

Inasmuch as these songs cannot be arranged chronologically, I have elected to group them according to attitude and type.

"THE BITTER AMERICA..."

In the first place, then, we hear of criticism and unhappiness. America is indirectly considered responsible for husbands' betrayals of wives and the disintegration of families. These sentiments are to be found mainly in the songs of either agunes (deserted wives), or of soon to be parted lovers. The agune-songs are not rare in Yiddish folklore. They appeared formerly as love songs, lullabies, recruits' and even humorous songs. With the beginnings of Jewish emigration to America in the 60's and 70's of the past century and the later mass emigration at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the agune became a more frequent figure, in consequence of the opportunity America presented for desertion. Incidentally, it is the agune songs to which I. Orshanski in the 60's referred as the only factual evidence of emigration at that time: "Unfortunately we have no data on the details of this phenomenon, no statistics on its size. As far as I know, nothing about it was ever even mentioned in print up to now. It is therefore interesting to dwell upon those undetermined and not precise data concerning this which we can gather from the Yiddish folksong." 4

The wife who was left behind with the children ascribed her bitter circumstances to America whose fortunes and temptations brought about her husband's betrayal. Her bitterness was aggravated by the fact that according to Jewish law, only the husband is permitted to send his wife a divorce. Accordingly, the request for a divorce recurs in a number of the agune songs.

The translations of the song excerpts that follow are more or less literal and may therefore sound awkward in places. The Yiddish original texts are cited in footnotes only for previously unpublished songs.

1. **Oh, my dear huaband / May you rot in the earth / And remain without years / How long / Must I beg you / To write me a letter? / I cry and wail at night / I lie awake and think / Perhaps you cannot live without me / I beg you, my husband / To be so good / and send me a reply.**

- - - - -

Listen here, you scoundrel / Oh, you rascal / May you bum like a fire / A curse upon your years / For going off / And refusing to return to me / The children beg for food / And you have forgotten / There is no bread to live on / I have already pawned everything / Even your prayer shawl / And you don't want to send me a reply....

Fat Sore / And black-haired Dobe / Are already fortunate / Their husbands have made them happy / And have sent them money / They have left for New York / While I remain

⁴ I. G. Orshanski: [Folk Songs of the Russian Jews] in *Hakarmel*, Russian supplement, nos. 31,32 (1867); republished in his *Jevreji v Rossii* (1877), pp. 391-401, eep. 396f. Quoted by Z. Skuditski in *Folklor-lider*, Moscow, 1936, vol. 2, p. 26.

shut in / And sit and wait / I have been ejected from the apartment / *Moyshela is sick* / I **pray** to the heavens / And you don't want to send me a reply....

Perhaps you have there / Another in my stead / I shan't begrudge you those American joys [glikn] / Do not suppose / I will weep for you / But a divorce you must send me / May you perish / In the golden land / God will give me a second / And I will be rid of such an affliction / From me, your wife Khaye Sore....5

Another variant of this **song has additional verses of a more moralizing nature:**

4. ... It's already six years / That you're so far away / To America you went to seek your fortune / You left me here / An unhappy wife / And don't want to send me a reply.

I can't understand / What has happened to you / That you should forget your family / Your three small children / To whom you were so devoted / You never would eat without them.

I can't understand / That it doesn't bother you / You have learned such tyrannous ways / You have been away from me / So long / That your character has already changed.

The bitter America takes away strength / And reduces many wretched to tears / [It takes so long] until you finally raise [*khovel oys*] husbands and wives / Then they are not heard from.

Those who leave, promise / That they will look after their family / A yearpasses before / They even remember/To send the first letters....6

In another song the agune sings to her child of her misfortune: “Your father went to America where he drinks the best beer,” while she was left behind with two small children. Greater is her pain when she recalls that it was she who saved him from imprisonment. She contrasts his prosperity-drinking beer and wine and dancing at balls-with her own poverty and hard life.

3. Your father went to America / And there drinks the best beer / Me he left with two small children / Like a beggar at a door.

Your father went to America / And there drinks the best wine / I wanted to spare him from all misfortunes / He should not go to prison.

Your father went to America/ And there dances at balls /Me he left at Rokhele Shapiro' s / To wash her dishes for her. 7

In a dialogue between a querulous wife and her indifferent husband who is leaving for America, we again learn **of the contrast in circumstances following their separation:**

4. :Where are you going, Elikl / Elikl, my husband: / To America, my little wife / To America, my little dove / To America, my crown / You remain at home alone.

⁵ Sh. Bastomski: *Bayrn kval...*, Vilna, 1923, p. 77, no. 15; variant in *Brivelekh fun rusland*, Warsaw, 1913, p. 3.

⁶ Skuditski, vol. 2, p. 120.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 113; Y. Dobrushin and A. Yuditski: *Yidische folkslider*, Moscow, 1949, p. 225, n. 40. This song is reminiscent of another agune song, one in which America is not mentioned though probably meant, since in it the husband has left for a very distant land to make his fortune (Skudits'ki, p. 124):

Leaning on her elbow / A young woman sits late at night / Tears pour from her eyes / As she sits alone and thinks.

Children, children, your father no more will you see / (Except) sometimes on **paper** / Your father left to make his fortune / Alack and alas for me.

Your father left to make his fortune / In a very distant land / May he at least send me a divorce / Lest shame befall me.

Your father left me / At strange homes, before a strange door / By the whole world an agune regarded / Alack and alas for me.

:What then will I eat, eat / Elikl, my husband: / Bread, my little wife....

:Where will I get bread, bread / Elikl, my husband: / You will work, my little wife....

Elikl went away / And his wife remained at home / Oh, she suffers hunger / While he prospers there / Oh, farewell, my dear little wife / Oh, farewell, my dear little dove / Farewell, my precious crown / Die at home **alone**.⁸

A variant of this song speaks of the dishes the wife must prepare for the Sabbath, about which the husband at first seems unconcerned and becomes increasingly annoyed :

6. Where are you going, Elikl, my husband / Where are you going, Elik, you **scoundrel** / To America, my little wife / To America, my little dove / To America, my crown / My golden beauty.

Where then will I get meat for the Sabbath /Where then will I get meat for the Sabbath / At the butcher's, my little wife....

Where then will I get candles for the Sabbath / Where then will I get candles for the Sabbath / I will tie you up / So you won't have to light candles / And no money do I have.

Where then will I get *tsimes*⁹ for the Sabbath /Where then will I get tsimes for the Sabbath / If you keep on about *tsimes* / *You grow* tiresome / And no money do I have.

Where then will I get bread for the Sabbath / Where then will I get bread for the Sabbath / If you keep on about bread / Then go drop dead / And no money do I have.¹⁰

The following song merely mentions America as the place to which the husband has set out. Actually it is a type of unhappy love song in which the wife recalls the last conversation she had with her husband before he left for America.

6. *You* are setting off for America, my dear life / While I remain in Russia / Oh, I tell you, my dear sweet life / To write me frequently.

Frequent letters will I write you / But you won't be able to read them / I tell you, my dear sweet life / That you will yet regret your years.

Remember when we went to the wedding canopy / How the moon and stars shone brightly for us / Even then my heart told me / That we would not be together long....¹¹

The last song of this group is a love song of parting in which a girl grieves over the ill-fated outcome of her love affair. Weeping over the impending departure of her lover, she tells him that "a girl who would fall in love should foresee the end." She is distrustful of him and feels that he is running off to America in order to break off with her.

7. I stand at the river's edge / And cannot come to you / You with your sweet talk / Have destroyed my life.

My fingers will become pens / And my lips as paper pale /With the tears of my eyes / Will I write love letters to you.

My heart yearns for you / As magnet draws to steel / Whoever begins to play at love / Should see that it is for keeps.

My eyes refuse to dry / And my head is numb from pain / Whoever dares play at love / Should not be made a fool.

⁸ *Tsaytshrift fat yidisher geshikhte, demografye un ekonomik, literatur-forshung, shprakh-vishnshaft un etnogatjye* (Minsk), vol. 2-3 (1928), p. 814.

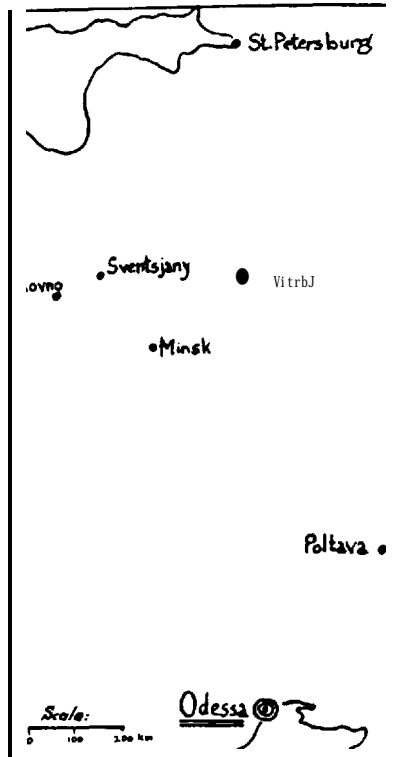
⁹ Fruit or vegetable preserves served on the Sabbath and on holidays.

¹⁰ Skuditski, p. 114.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 112; Dobrushin and Yuditski, p. 225.

Why do you inflict this torment / Oh, torment and pain / In the finest love affair / The outcome should be foreseen.

You want to go to America with me / For you know I have no money / You want to put an end to my young years / Through you my world is ruined....”



**DISPERSION OF SROLOLEM ALEICHEM'S
LULLABY BETWEEN 1892 AND 1901**

“IN AMERICA THERE IS JOY FOR ALL”

Of the folksongs **collected about** America there is a number that presents America in a favorable and optimistic light.” In comparing the second group with the former we find that sometimes the same circumstances prevail, the same problems, the same alleged prosperity in America, but the attitude of the singer is an altogether different one. This group looks to America with hope, as to the land of plenty, of milk and honey, of freedom.

One of the most popular and widespread of all songs of this kind is the lullaby Shlof, mayn **kind** (“Sleep, my child”). This is one of the few well-known poems

¹² S. M. Ginzburg and P. S. Marek: *Jevrejskije natodnyje pesni v Rossii St. Petersburg, 1901*, p. 168.

¹³ Incidentally, this aspect was ignored by the Soviet folklorist Z. Skuditeki, who only mentioned the first, negative, category (op. cit., p. 26).

written by the great prose writer, Sholom Aleichem, in 1892.¹⁴ That this song became a folksong almost immediately is evinced by the fact that six years later, when the compilers of the first major collection of Yiddish folksongs, Gineburg and Marek, started to gather their material, this song was sent in by five different correspondents from five different localities and was published in 1901 as one among over 300 Yiddish folksongs (see map). This song is still being sung today with different texts and at least five melodic variants.¹⁶

A mother rocks her son to sleep and describes the wonders of that distant land America, where his father has gone, "By your cradle your mother sits, sings a song and weeps. You may some day understand what her weeping meant." Her tears are not bitter, as in the songs of the agunes, they are not tears of resentment or accusation, but of hope and longing for reunion in America. America for her means the paradise where *khale* (white bread baked only for the Sabbath and holidays) can be eaten every day and where she will prepare broth for her son.

8. Sleep, my child, sweet comfort mine / Sleep now, lyu-lyu-lyu / Sleep, my life, sole kadish¹⁶ mine / Sleep, my little one.

By your cradle your mother sits / Sings a song and weeps / Some day you may understand / What her weeping meant.

In America is your father / lyu-lyu-lyu / You are but still a child / So sleep, my little son.

In America there is for all / Heal joy [gluk], they say / And for all a paradise / Something wondrous.

There on weekdays they eat / Khale, my little son / Broths will I cook for you / Sleep now, lyu-lyu-lyu.

God bidding, he will send us / Letters, my little one / And will make us happy very soon / So sleep, lyu-lyu-lyu.

He will send us twenty dollars / And his picture too / He will take us-long life to him / Over there.

He will hug us then and kiss us / Even dance for joy / Torrents of tears will I then shed / And weep quietly.

Until the good ticket comes / Sleep, lyu-lyu-lyu / For sleep is a dear remedy / So sleep, my little son.¹⁷

The original poem by Sholem Aleichem contains certain significant words and stanzas that were omitted or changed in the folksong variants.¹⁵ For example,

¹⁴ Published in *Kol mevaser tsu der yidisher folks-bibliyotek*, Odessa, 1892.

¹⁵ According to the author's footnote to the lullaby when it was first printed, it was to be sung to the melody of Lermontov's *Spi, mladenels moj prekrasnyj, bajuski baju*. However, another melody was inserted between pp. 24 and 25, and Sholem Aleichem writes: "After the poem, 'Sleep, My Child,' was already printed, we made the acquaintance of the talented music student, Mr. Dovid Kovanovski (the composer of the 'Notn leshirey teiyen'), who composed this authentic Jewish melody for us on the spot." This and other melodic variants in A. Z. Idelaohn: "The Folk Song of the East European Jews," *Thesaurus of Hebrew Oriental Melodies*, vol. 9, Leipzig, 1932, nos. 116, 128, 492, 628; Sarah P. Schack and E. S. Cohen: *Yiddish Folk Songs*, New York, 1927, no. 3, p. 18; A. Litvin Collection of Yivo, no. 96.

¹⁶ The son who recites the prayer for the dead parent.

¹⁷ Ginzburg and Marek, p. 73, no. 82; M. Beregovski and I. Fefer: *Yidishe folkslider*, Kiev, 1938, p. 318; Dobrushin and Yuditski, p. 53, no. 28; Schack and Cohen, no. 3, p. 18.

¹⁸ In the anthologies by Jacob Fikhman, *Di yidishe mwe*, Warsaw, 1911, p. 90, and M.

instead of “And for all a paradise” the original line reads “And for Jews a paradise” (yidn instead of *yedn*). Stanzas that were omitted are the following:

So, in the meantime, let us hope / What else can we do? / I would long have gone to him / But I know not where.

He will provide everything / For our sake / And will come ahead to meet us / So sleep, sleep, lyu-lyu.

These hopes were shared by thousands throughout Eastern Europe. In the cities and towns people waited for letters, for the “twenty dollars,” for a “picture” of the loved one across the seas—above all, their dream was that he “... take us over there.” Perhaps this is the reason that the song attained such popularity among the Jews of Eastern Europe, who later used the basic theme in a number of workers’, revolutionary, and ghetto songs.

Among the Yiddish ballads there is one which describes an accident in a linen factory in Jassy, Rumania, in which a girl met her death. Here America serves to contrast the tragedy : Saturday night she was supposed to go to America for the long-awaited reunion with her father—and on Friday her funeral was held instead.

9. Listen to what has occurred / In the linen factory in Jassy / Oh, when a girl ran back from lunch / The foreman sent her up to work.

As soon as the girl threw down the linen / All the machines remained still / And when they ran over to her / Her head was caught in the machine.

As soon as her mother came to the factory / She stood as though stunned / Oh, she caught the dead body to her / And hugged it and kissed.

Saturday night she was to go to America / Eight years had she her father not seen / Oh, Saturday night she was to go to America / And Friday her funeral will be....19

We have a song where a man decides to take his fate into his own hands and asks God to help him execute his decision to go to America, where he is ready to sell himself as a slave rather than remain in Russia. This song is interesting since it confirms a report in the 1880's of rumors that the emigrating Jews were to be sold as slaves in America. The Jews were supposed to have replied to this rumor thus: “... but even should we become slaves there . . . it is still better to be a slave in America than to live here under such terrible conditions.”²⁰

10. One thing, God, will I beg of you / That it may be granted me / From Russia I must flee / America will be my goal.

Of no joy do I know / in Russia it is very bad / To America I will set out / And sell myself as a slave.... 21

Basin, Finf hundert yor yidische poezye, New York, 1917, p. 240, the following stanzas are also included in the lullaby: “There they know not of exile, oppression / Persecution, little son / Nor of worry, grief / So sleep, lyu-lyu. — There, they say, Jews are / Rich, no evil eye / Each one lives contendedly / All are equal.”

¹⁹ Yidisher folklor, Yiddish Scientific Institute, New York, no. 1 (January 1954), p. 10.

²⁰ M. Friedhinder: *Fünf Wochen in Brody unter jüdisch-russischen Emigranten*, Vienna, 1882; quoted in *Gehikhte fun der yidiaher arbeter-bavegung in di fateynikte shtatn* vol. 1, New York, 1943, p. 174.

²¹ A. Litvin Collection of Yivo, no. 904. The original text:

In the following group of songs light is shed on internal relations existing within the Jewish community, more specifically on the age-old traditionally set conventions of marriage. The *yikhes* (social status) of the prospective bride or groom played the dominant role in arranging a match. The highest status in a groom was considered his own learning or his descent from learned people, while in the bride's case the larger the *nadán* (dowry) she could provide, the better. There were many instances where love affairs, usually carried on clandestinely, had to be severed because of parental standards and objections. By such lovers the happy solution that America presented was also carried over into their song, where we see America as a means of breaking through social barriers.

A girl promises her lover, on the eve of his leaving for service in the army, that she will wait five years for him. If after that time, she frets, his parents disapprove of her, what then? He reassures her; in that event they will simply elope to America and marry there,

11. Oh, my joy, my dearest life / Both are we an equal pair / I swear to you by my very life / That I will wait five years for you.

Five years will I wait for you / Upon the sixth you will be freed / And if I will not please your parents / Ah, my pain will then be great.

Do not fret, my dear life / Lest my parents be not pleased / To America will we run off / And have our wedding there.

We will have our wedding there / In the presence of ten [minyén] / God in heaven will be our witness / And 'neath the canopy will bless us....²²

Eyn zakh vel ikh, got, ba dir betn / Az di zakh zol mir zayn bashert / Fun rusland muz ikh optretn / Keyn amerike vet zayn mayn pakhod.

Fun keyne glikn veys ikh nit / In rusland iz mir xeyet shlekht / Keyn amerike muz ikh opjorn / Fatkoyjn vel ikh zikh jar a knekht....

EYN ZAKH VEL IKH GOT BAY DIR BE - TN, AZ DI

ZAKH - ZOL MIR ZAYN - BA - SHERT, FUN RUS-LAND MUZ - IKH OP-

TRE - TN, KEYN A - ME - RI - KE VET ZAYN - MAYN PA - KHOD.

FUN KEY-NE GLI-KN VEYS IKH - MIT, IN - RUS-LAND IZ MIR ZEY-ER SHLEKHT,

KEYN A - ME - RI - KE MUZ - IKH OP - FO - RN, FAR - KOY- FN VEL IKH ZIKH FAR A KNEKHT.

²² Y. L. Cahan: *Yidische folkslider nit melodies oys dem folksmoyl, vol. 1, New York, 1912, p. 102, no. 12.*

In a variant to this song it is the girl that proposes eloping to America:

12. The beginning of our love affair / Was as sugar sweet / But the end of our love affair / Proved very bitter....

If you love me truly / I will ask you something / Sneak away from your parents / And come to see me off.

And when you will come out of the army / You will already not want me / Let's both go to America / There we will have our wedding...."

A similar motive for going to America is revealed in a song in which a rich girl confides in her mother about her lover and begs her to let her marry him. The mother furiously points out the difference in status between them; she disinherits her, as she says, for "cursing" her parents, and tells her to marry whomever she wishes. The couple in the song take their things and go off to America.

13. Mother love, mother dear/My head aches I grow ill / Heal the wounds of my heart / And give me the one I want.

Daughter love, daughter dear / Poison would I rather give / When you have a father so rich / A rogue you choose for a husband.

Mother love, mother dear / Do not boast of your wealth / I have seen many richer than we / But we outlive them all. [!]

Daughter love, daughter dear / I cast you off as my child / If you can so curse your father and mother / Then marry whomever you wish.

Sweetheart love, sweetheart dear / To my mother I have spoken / The next day we took our money and things / And for America we left.

As soon as we came to America / We turned rich from poor / With how many boys I went / No one is equal to mine...."

In a lighter vein is the song In amerike forn *furn* ("In America wagons ride"). In America, when a boy loves a girl, he kneels before her and will wed her without a penny, i.e., without her having to provide a dowry. In America she will be his equal.

14. In America wagons ride / Up hill and down / And when a boy loves a girl / He kneels before her.

In America *khales* are baked / For the whole world / And when a boy loves a girl / He weds her without a cent.

In America *be ygl* are baked/For a whole year / I-your groom, and you-my bride / An equal pair will we be. 25

Another opportunity that America offered was the escape from the horrors of the Tsarist military service. The agonies which Jewish soldiers underwent in the Tsarist army make up a sad chapter in Jewish history. For orthodox Jewry military service was especially hard since the Russian army did not recognize their right to *kashrut* and those soldiers were forced to subsist for three or four years on a diet of cold water and dry bread.

²³ S. Z. Pipe: [Yiddish Folksongs from Galicia (Sanok)], *Yivo-bleter* 11 (1937), p. 68.

²⁴ *Der pinkes* (Vilna), 1913, p. 402, no. 8.

²⁵ Ginzburg and Marek, p. 183, no. 228; Dobrushin and Yuditski, p. 67, no. 18.

The first song is of a recruit who would have fled to America had he had the money. Judging from the terms used and from the first stanza, it would appear that the singer had come to Russia from Austria (Galicia) and there had fallen into the hands of the *khapers* (snatchers of boys for impression into military service).

16. As soon as I came to Russia / With a wail and with a cry / I at once resolved / That I would not become a soldier.

How many tears did my dear mother shed / Until she bore me / Today a [recruiting] board arrived / And made me a soldier.

They took me to the engagement party / Seated me in the middle / Gave me a sabre for a bride / And the emperor became my in-law.

As soon as I came to the squadron / I already thought of escaping / Should I serve three years / Should I run to America?

To America I would escape / And travel throughout the world / But I have, alas, one drawback / There isn't a single penny.²⁶

We have here the very popular image, which recurs in many songs, of the recruit's "marriage," i.e. induction, with the sabre becoming his bride and the emperor his father-in-law.

In another song a Jewish recruit enumerates the many hardships to be expected in the army and after each stanza sings a refrain:

16. Well, I ask you, my Lord, is it just / And how is a person to bear it? / Give *me* your answer to this, my Lord / Should I not run off to America?²⁷

The third soldier's song stems from the first World War and is the only one of many variants with mention of America. The song is found in many collections and can still be heard quite often. It is a song of a wounded soldier in World War I. In this variant the soldier has run away and, being wounded, regrets his not having gone to America before his life was ruined.

17. The [19]14th year arrived / To be a soldier I was taken / Three days I lay in the barracks / And no food was given.

Three fled from the regiment / The first bullet struck me / Who will follow my funeral? / Only my faithful horse.

Who will weep and mourn for me? / Who will recite kadish after me? / Amidst the woods, in the fields / A soldier lies slain.

My mother wrote to the Red Cross / That her son remained in the field / I should better have gone to America / Before ruining my young life.²⁸

²⁶ A. Litvin Collection of Yivo, no. 613. The original text:

Ikh bin nor keyn rusland gekumen / Mit eyn yomer un mit eyn geveyn / In zinen hob ikh mir genumen / Az keyn zelner zol ikh nit zayn.

Vift trern hot mayn mamenuy geton fargisn / Eyder zi hot mikh gehat / Haynt iz ongekumen a komisyeh / Un m'hot mikh gemakht jar eyn soldat.

M'hol mikh tsu farlobung genumen / Gezetst hot men mikh in der mitn / Dos zeybele jar a kale gegeben / Vnder keyser blaybt mayn mekhutn.

Vi ikh bin in akadron arayngekumen / Geklert hob ikh shoyn oyt a[nt]loyfn / Tsi zol ikh dray yor dinen / Tsi zol ikh keyn amerike antloyfn.

Keyn amerike volt ikh antlofn / Barayzt di gantee velt / Nor leyder ikh hob a khiaorn / S'iz nito keyn graytser gelt.

²⁷ M. Osherovitch: *Shtet un shtetlekh in Ukraine*, vol. 1, New York, 1948, p. 20.

²⁸ Bastomski, p. 108, no. 3.

“A LETTER TO MOTHER”

What were the sentiments of the new immigrant in America? According to the songs that were sung in Eastern Europe—disillusionment, bitterness, and loneliness. These were also expressed in the songs by the older Yiddish poets in this country in the early 90’s and the beginning of this century: Vintshevski, Edelshtat, Yoysef Bovshover, Rosenfeld, and others; they were also reflected in the Yiddish theater.²⁹

The following two songs might well be a product of the Yiddish theater. They describe the transformation and disillusionment of young immigrant girls in America.

18. There came a cousin to me / Pretty as gold was she, the green one / Her cheeks were like red oranges / Her little feet just begged for a dance.

She walked not but she skipped / She talked not but she sang / Gay and cheerful was her manner / This is how my cousin once was.

I came in to my neighbor/Who has a millinery store / I got a job for my cousin / Praised be the golden land.

Many years have since passed / My cousin became a wreck / Many years of collecting wages / Till nothing was left of her.

Beneath her pretty blue eyes / Black lines are drawn / Her cheeks, once like red oranges / Have turned completely green already.

Today, when I meet my cousin / And I ask her: How are you, green one? / She’ll reply with a grimace / To blazes with Columbus’s country.”

19. I am a little girl, a green one from Poland / Came to America in search of a good boy / Girls, oh girls, green from Poland / What America is, I will tell you.

I came to New York, a town a delight / And bless the Lord for the land so free / Girls....

Two weeks at my rich uncle’s / And they begin to ask me: How do you like America....

They tell me with a smile: You must “ungreen” yourself / And with they they mean: Go out and earn....

I run around from shop to shop, I run senselessly / But because I am green I can’t find a job....

²⁹ Perhaps one of the most popular songs describing the hard life of the immigrant of that period was Morris Rosenfeld’s *Mayn yingele* (“My little son”), in which a father **sings** of his little son whom he never has a chance to be with, since he must leave for work at dawn when the boy is still asleep and returns late at night when his son has long been put to bed. Many such songs were widely current throughout Eastern Europe.

³⁰ A. Litvin Collection of Yivo, no. 227A. The original text:

Es iz tsu mir gekumen a kuzine / Sheyn vi gold iz zi geven, di grine / Di bekelekh vi royte pomerantsn / Fiselekh vos betn zikh tsum tantsn.

Nit gegangen iz zi—nor geshprungen / Nit geredt, nor gerungen / Freylekh, lustik iz geven it mine / Ot aza geven iz mayn kuzine.

Ikh bin arayn tsu-mayn nekst-dorke / Vos zi hot a milineri-storke / A dzhab gekrogn hob ikh far mayn kuzine / At lebn zol di goldene medine.

Avek raynen fun demolt on shoyn yorn / Fun mayn kuzine iz a tel gevorn / Peydes yorn lang hot zi geklibn / Bia fun ir aleyx iz nisht geblibn.

Unter ire bloye sheyne oygn / Shvartse pasn hobn zikh fartsoygn / Di bekelekh, di royte pomerantsn / Hobn zikh shoyn oysgegrint in gantsn.

Haynt, at ikh bagegn mayn kurine / Un ikh freg zi: “Vos zhe makhstu, grine?” / Entjert zi mir mit a krumet mine / “Az brenen zol kolumbuses medine!”

Found one finally at a relative's, what a **joy** / Earn almost five dollars a week **and work by the piece**....

I meet up with a boy, an East Broadway dandy / He pays me many compliments and already asks for my hand. . .

Ah, in this land, the rich one of all pleasures / You can't get the holiest, the purest here....

This pure love, this truthful life/This Uncle Sam will not give **at any price**....”

The following song is again in the popular form of a letter, in which the singer writes to his mother of his longing to see her again. He would return but his wife, fearing the threat of military conscription in Russia, forbids it. This song, entitled *A briv fun amerike* (“A Letter from America”), is by one of the most popular Yiddish folk poets, M. M. Varshavski, whose songs were the favorites of Eastern European Jewry.

20. Dear mama, dear mother /My dear pure heart /Do you know how I weep so bitterly / And how great my pain is here? / Oh, what would I not give / To look upon you / I would give my life for you / If I could only return to you.

But these are not the years / That we can do everything / Mama, I cannot come to you / Writing this isn't easy for me / Leyenyu forbids it, she is afraid / She trembles at the thought of conscription.. .³³

In another song regret is expressed about having left home, for what fortunes were then found in America?

21. Why did I run to America / And what fortunes met me there? / Since I remained alone / So far from my sisters and brothers.

³¹ A. Litvin Collection of Yivo, no. 228A. The original text:

Bin ikh mir a meydele, a *grininke fun poyln* / Kum *ikh keyn amerike, nokh a boy a voyln* / *Meydelekh, ay meydelekh, grininke fun poyln* / Vos es iz *amwike vel ikh aykh dertseyln*.

Gekumen bin ikh keyn nyu-york—a shtetl gor a mekhaye / *Un bentsh dokh take got jar doš land dos jraye*....

Opgeven tsvey vokhn bay dem onkl bay dem raykhn / *Un men heybt mikh on tsu fregn shoyn: Vi tust amerike glaykhn*....

Men zogt mit mit a shmeykhele: darfst zikh geyn oysgrinen / *Un in ernst meynt men dos: gey zikh dir jardinen*....

Zkh loyj arum fun shaptsu shap, ikh loyf arum on zinen / *Nor vayl ikh bin a grininke, ken ikh keyn drhab gefinen*....

Gefunen endlekh, bay a korev, gor a glik / *Fardin a vokh finf dolar koym, un arbet mir fun shtik*....

Kh'baken zikh mit a bokherl an ist-brodvey[er] frant / *Er git mir komplimentn fil un bet shoyn gor mayn hant*....

Akh in dem land, dem tayern, jun ale fargenign / *Dos heylikste, doš herlekhste kent ir do nit krign*. . .

Ot di libe reyninke, ot doš vare lebn / *Doš vet dokh aykh jar keyn jal “onkl sem” . . . nit gebn*....

³² “Some young people who came here in the [18]40's and 50's and returned to Russia already as Americans were arrested by the police as fugitives from the Russian military service.” *Geshikhte fun der yidisher arbeter-bavegung*.. (see footnote 20), vol. 1, p. 67.

³³ Idelsohn, no. 746; M. M. Varshavski: *Yidishe folkslider*, 2nd ed., New York, 1918, p. 6.

Now my parents beg me to return / And to go back isn't right for me / A fire burns within me / For my dear devoted mother.

And my heart yearns only for her / I know she will give me back/My bread to live / And I sing my dear devoted mother's song.³⁴

The question, "Why did I run to America?" appears in a fragment of a variant in which the singer seems to be on a boat going back.

22. Why did I run to America / And what fortune met me there? / : I write a letter and sit on the boat:

When I lie on my bed / I count the hours on the clock / : I moan and weep, for tomorrow I must....: 35

This sentiment of longing for home and mother found expression in the song *A brivele der mamen* ("A Letter to Mother") written by S. Shmulevitz in America. Although the song is of the mother in the old country who begs her child in America not to forget to write her a letter, it became the beloved song of both sons and daughters in America as well as of lonesome parents left behind.

19. My child, my comfort, you are going away / See that you be a good eon / This, with tears and worry / Your devoted mother begs of you.

You are going, my child, my only child / Across distant seas / Oh arrive there in good health / And don't forget your mother....

Yes, depart and get there in safety / See that you send a letter each week / To refresh your mother's heart, my child.

A letter to mother/Do not delay/ Writesoon, dear child/ And give her some consolation / Your mother will read your letter / And w-ill rejoice / You will heal her wounds / Her bitter heart / You will refresh her spirit.³⁶

In the last stanza we learn:

In New York City, a rich house / Of hearts without pity / There livee her eon / He lives quite well / With divine gifts....

He receives a letter informing him of his mother's death and of her last wish that he recite the *kadish* after her.

"LONG LIVE AMERICA WITH ITS DOLLARS "

The Jews in Eastern Europe suffered acute poverty during the depression following World War I and were largely dependent upon the aid which American Jewry provided, through individuals as well as through specially set-up relief organizations. The American dollar was considered the only stable currency and trading of dollars for other currency was conducted extensively. There arose a number of humorous songs about the American dollar in Poland, where poverty was especially great.

For the sake of dollars, one song reveals, the singer is ready to marry a shrew, a cripple, as long as she has dollars, or even an aunt in America.

³⁴ Skuditski, p. 112.

³⁵ Pipe, [Folklore Songs] (see footnote 2), p. 354.

³⁶ Idelsohn, no. 428; Nathan Ausubel: *A Treasury of Jewish Folklore, New York, 1948*, p. 677.

24. Dollars, give them here to me / Dollars, that is my desire / Let my bride be a shrew / As long as [she has] a full sack of dollars / Dollars, give them here to me....

Let my bride be deformed / As long as [she has] an aunt in America / Dollars....

Let her be without a nose / As long as [she has] a full measure of dollars....

Let her be swollen like a barrel / As long as [she has] a whole street of dollars....²⁷

There is irony coupled with bitterness in the songs describing the relief which various American Jewish delegations brought. It often seemed to the Jews in Poland that the visiting delegates didn't possess the necessary understanding for their fundamental needs. They also felt that these delegates often used their positions on the relief committees to their own advantage.

26. Long live America / With her dollars / The delegates arrive / And proceed to fool us / They take the dollars and change them *for* marks / And achieve thereby the beet speculations.

Long live America / When she became aware / That we, in Vashlikov, go naked and in rags / She sent us fancy shoes / With long pointed tips / The girls want to go walking with the boys / And have to stay at home.³³

This ridicule of the aid which American Jewry sent is again expressed in a variant:

26. Long live America / Long may she thrive / When she learned / That we are in tatters / She clothed us / In satin and plush / And made us up / Like fools in top **hats**.³⁴

Another song praises the American Jews for sending dollars but not for their delegates:

27. Our American brothers send us dollars / Blessed be their deeds / There is only one thing bothering us, brothers / Why must you send us the delegates? ⁴⁰

Criticism of the local committees which were created for the purpose of distributing relief was articulated in the following song. The money and clothes that were sent from America, so it seemed to the people, were taken away by the committee men instead of being distributed to the poor.

28. Long live America / For sending us clothes / So that the committee men can have / Rolls to bake [i.e. so they can trade the clothes for bread].

Long live America / For sending us dollars / So that the committee men can have / What to take.

Long live America / For sending us flour / May the committee men / Turn green and yellow.

Long live America / For sending us bread / May the committee men / All drop dead.⁴¹

³⁷ *Yidiahe filologye* (Warsaw), I, 1924, p. 94.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Sent in by Mr. B. Levin, Los Angeles, 1954. The original text: *Undz're amerikaner brider shikn undz dolarn / Gebentsht zoln rayn ayere tatn / Nor eyn zakh, brider, vos undz tut am / Tsu vos shikt ir tsu undz di delegatn?*

⁴¹ Received from Mr. L. Ran, New York, 1953, who recorded the song in Vashlikov before World War II. The original text:

*Lebn zol amerike / Vos zi shikt undz yakn / Far di komitetnikes / Bulkelekh tsu bakn.
Lebn zol amerike / Vos zi shikt undz dolarn / Az di komitetnikea / Zoln hobn vos tsu sham.
Lebn zol amerike / Vos zi shikt undz mel / Zoln di komitetnikeu / Vern grin un gel.
Lebn zol amerike / Voe zi shikt undz broyt / Zoln di komitetnikes / Krign dem toyt.*

The final song which treats of this same situation is a parody on the lullaby by Sholom Aleichem (see no. 8). The images which were used formerly to present hope and optimism are here transformed into pessimism and bitterness. The dollars which the father will send from America will now be used to buy worthless Polish marks. The broth that the mother promised to prepare for her son is now eaten by the American delegates in Warsaw. In this song, criticism of the new Poland of 1918 (which was resurrected following the Versailles Peace Treaty) is revealed, particularly for its worthless currency and its disorder, in which packages get lost. Furthermore, the inability to comprehend the bureaucratic ways of American delegates made the Polish Jews skeptical and critical of the good intentions of the former.

29. Sleep, my child, my comfort, life / Sleep already, lyu-lyu-lyu / Food "shmoed", bah, t'is ugly / Shut your little eyes.

From America your father / Dear little child / Has sent us a package / So sleep, lyu-lyu-lyu.

And a few dollars too/Dear little child /Your father, long life to him /Sent us over here. For a dollar you can get / Whole eacka of marks / And we both, child mine, will grow / Rich without end.

But the package has been lost / Alack and woe is me / And the dollars have been frozen / So sleep, sleep, my child.

And the dollars lie around / Somewhere in the banks / And we both, my child, get / None of it meanwhile.

Someone from America is here / A man called Morgenthau 43 / He nourishes us upon his speeches / Alack and woe is me.

And after him a Doctor **Bogen**⁴³ / Who speaks endlessly / The delegates come and go / So sleep, meanwhile, sleep.

They come to ease our troubles / Our worry and our pain /But they sit around like lords / in the Angielski Bar:44

There they eat on weekdays / broths with chicken, too / While we, my child, both are ill / So sleep, eleep, my son.

Neither dollars, nor a package / Do we have, my child / Oh we're caught in a trap / So sleep, sleep, my child.46

⁴² Henry Morgenthau, Sr. (1856-1946), head of Woodrow Wilson's commission to investigate the treatment of Jews in the newly created Polish republic.

⁴³ Boris David Bogen (1869-1929), director-general of the Joint Distribution Committee during World War I.

⁴⁴ A Warsaw restaurant.

⁴⁵ A. Litvin Collection of Yivo, no. 826. The original text:

Shloj mayn kind, mayn treyst mayn khiyes / Shloj shoy'n lyu-lyu-lyu / Esn shmes'n juy, s'iz miyes / Makh di eyegekh tsu.

Fun amerike dayn foter / Tayet kindenyu / Undz geshikt a pekl hoi er / Shloj the lyu-lyu-lyu. Un dertsu nokh a por doler / Tayer kindenyu / Shikt dayn tate, lebn, zol er / Undz ahertsutsu. Far a doler kon men krign / Markn gants zek / Un mir beyde, kind mayns, vern / Kaykh gor on an ek.

Nor dos pekl iz jarloym / Vey iz mir un vind / Un di dolers oysgefroyrn / Shloj she, sh'of mayn kind.

Un di doler blaybn ligh / Ergets in di benk / Un mir beyde, kind mayns, krign / Oy dervayl a krenk.

Epes iz do fun amerike / Eyner Morgntoy / Shpayt et undz mit zayne droashes / Vey ix mir un oy.

Un nokhim a dokter Bogn / Redt et on a sof / Kumen, forn meshulokhim / Shloj zhe dervayle, shlof.

With the introduction of immigration restrictions in the United States which culminated in the Quota Law of 1924, Jewish mass immigration to this country was virtually ended. As the gates of the golden land were closed to the East European Jews, so were their hopes and aspirations for America extinguished. The songs that arose after that period may have been a reflection of this realization that America had become an unattainable dream, for no new songs about the golden land were composed or imported; or was it that the daily, more pressing, problems took precedence in the songs that were sung? In any event, the Yiddish folksong of Eastern Europe no longer spoke of America-of its golden fortunes for the poverty-stricken, of the refuge for the oppressed, of the solution for unhappy lovers, of homesick letters, of weeping, of dreams, of joys. ...

Zey kumen lindern undzere tsores / Undzer vey un tsar / Nor zey zitsn vi di srores / In angielski bar.

Dortn est men in der vokhn / Yaykhelekh mit hun / Un mir beyde, kind mayns, zokhn / Shlof zhe, shloj, mayn tun.

Nit keyn dolers, nisht keyn pekl / Hobn mir mayn kind / Oy, lign mir tif in zekl / Shlof zhe, shlof mayn kind.

SHLOF MAYN KIND, MAYN TREYST MAYN KHI-YES SHLOF ZHE LYU - LYU -- LYU ;
 E - SN -- SHME - SN -, FUT, S'IZ MI-YES, MAKH DI EY -- GE - LEKH TSV,
 E - SN -- SHME - SN -, FUT, S'IZ MI-YES, MAKH DI EY -- GE - LEKH TSV..

ARTICULATING MUSIC WITH FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY**DANIEL CHAZANOFF**

The following paper was prepared for the Annual Meeting of the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers and delivered on October 14, 1975 to that body. We think that the ideas expressed can be relevant and meaningful to those hazzanim and music teachers whose duty it is to teach Jewish music, Some of us have long felt that in most congregational schools music is used merely as a respite from more "serious" study, as a sort of musical coffee break for the tired student. Perhaps this is why success in this field is so limited. Since music in Jewish life is not an adornment to it, but rather a part of its very fabric, so, too, music should be conceived of not as a respite from the curriculum, but rather as an integral part of its core.

In our situation we are trying to do more than to teach a tune. The words, ideas, history and cultural background of each song or prayer melody taught should be intimately correlated with the Hebrew vocabulary, on a graded level, which is so important a part of the religious school's curriculum.

We think that Dr. Chazanoff's paper might point the way.

SR

Dr. Daniel Chazanoff is the Director of Music for the City School District of Rochester, New York. He has more than two decades of experience as teacher, conductor, performer and administrator. He is a first-rate cellist, having served at the first desks of The Birmingham Symphony, The Berkshire Music Festival among others.

The Three E's of Cultural Learning: *Exposure, Expression, Experience.*

You can go just so far in talking about culture. Sooner or later foreign language teachers and students must come to grips with it through participation and experience. A simple formula to be followed by the foreign language teacher, regardless of talent or musical level, would include three ingredients or the three E's of cultural learning as follows :

1. EXPOSURE to a rich cultural environment
2. EXPRESSION through participation or doing *and*
3. EXPERIENCE which results from EXPOSURE and EXPRESSION

The poet Heinrich Heine once said, "Where words fail, there music begins". It follows that music can take the foreign language student into a cultural realm not possible with the spoken or written word alone. Culture is not only ideas and knowledge ; it is also feelings and communication.

We need to bridge the gap which separates language technicians from educated linguists ; it is the excitement of a cultural experience which gives the student the feeling of a land from which a particular language comes. Culture should be thought of as facets of human experience which spring from the soil of a land or people. As such, it appears in many forms i.e., language, music, dance, literature, poetry, food, costume, architecture and mores. The unique quality of music lies in its ability to underline the sonority, rhythm and inflections inherent to each language. Could any of us imagine singing "All mankind are brothers" to Beethoven's setting of Schiller's "Ode to Joy" instead of "*Alle menchen seinen bruder*". The words means exactly the same thing ; yet, the feeling would not be the same.

The Anatomy of a Musical Score: *Foreign Language as a Component Part*

In dealing with music and foreign language, one should be aware of two coexistent media ; sound and the spoken or written word. The anatomy of any musical score is made up of both. Foreign language terms, as part of any instrumental music score, guide the speed, mood, dynamics and nuance of a performance. In the case of vocal music, it does the same but, in addition, provides inspiration through the written word, for the musical settings of the composer and the spoken word of the singer. Why not utilize the written and spoken word of vocal music settings to make language study more functional? What better way to begin than through the use of folk songs which reflect the gamut of life in any culture. Some suggested steps to follow are :

1. find song material in the language being studied
2. teach the words of songs to students
3. enlist the help of a pianist, guitarist or accordionist to accompany the class (this includes teaching the melodic line to which the words are applied). This might be a music teacher, student or community resource person.
4. make tapes of learned songs so that a cassette library of resource material may be developed.

Conversely, foreign language learnings can enhance the understanding and enjoyment of music. Ask any theater manager what kind of production draws the largest audience for the longest period of time and you'll probably hear "The Broadway Show". Need I go any further than "Oklahoma" which ran for eight years on Broadway. The fusion of staging, story and memorable tunes brought this about. Our students know the tunes and understand the words of the American musical theater because both are part of our living culture. Yet, how many of our foreign language students know the tunes or understand the words of even the most popular operas written in Italian, French, or German? This requires a broadening of horizons.

Broadening Horizons : *From Ideas and Knowledge to Awareness and Understanding*

In broadening horizons we must be aware that students relate to the living culture about them. At the same time, we cannot lose sight of the fact that they recognize and appreciate fine cultural presentations-and these need not be of a contemporary nature only. Students have an intellectual curiosity which requires nurturing-and we need to provide stimulating experiences which promote growth. We cannot assume that anything is “highbrow” or “lowbrow”; students should have the opportunity to decide for themselves. An experience of September 30 will bear this out. On that date, the Rochester Philharmonic played a program entitled “Shall We Dance” at an innercity junior high school in Rochester. The conductor, Isaiah Jackson, made comments about each work in the program, involved students by asking questions and the orchestra played dance music of various periods. At no time was the audience unruly or embarrassed. On the contrary, they were most enthusiastic and appreciative. In the context of “Articulating Music and Foreign Language Study” the living culture may move in or out of the school. The language teacher can begin by inviting talented students from his or her classes, students from other classes, faculty or community resource people to perform or talk about the music of the particular culture. Radio, television, videotapes, and films can also be used. The field trip is still another way of enriching the language class experience. Why not take your class to an opera, a dance company performance or a solo recital appropriate to the language studied?

Finally, if students are to become educated linguists, they need to develop a listening repertoire of the particular culture’s music. This should include a knowledge of folk songs and dances, composers, compositions and outstanding performers of the linguistic group. For the language teacher, a few minutes spent during a lesson in the playing of an appropriate recording can go a long way to inspire the class and, at the same time, add some variety to the instructional format.

A Listening Repertoire : *Spanish Music*

On the subject of a listening repertoire, I should like to speak briefly about Spanish music as a former student of high school Spanish. The Spanish culture has fired the imagination of Spanish and non-Spanish musicians alike. Pablo de Sarasate, the great Spanish violinist and composer, did much to popularize his country's idiom. Referring to Sarasate, the American violinist Aaron Rosand says, "When I think back to those student days, and the many recitals I attended rarely did one go by without something by Sarasate being included on the program. This is what we waited for, and, invariably it brought down the house. And Sarasate's music will continue to do so-as long as there are people to listen to the glories of the music of Spain, the beauty of guitars, of castanets, of dark-eyed mantilla-ed señoritas, of the fiesta brava, and of perfumed nights." While this statement is a fellow musician's reaction to Sarasate's music, it also aptly describes flamenco, the integrated musical form unique to Spain. For the student of Spanish, flamenco is not only exciting but also has a long history. The guitar, for example, was not born in Spain, it was brought there by the Moors when they invaded that country in 711 A.D. However, the Spanish created an impressive literature for that instrument. So much so, that the guitar and Spanish music are almost synonymous. Teenagers will be interested in the name Juan Arriaga, a contemporary of Mozart and Beethoven, who is known as the "Spanish Mozart". He composed an opera at the age of 13, was an Assistant Professor at the Paris Conservatory by the age of 18 and, unfortunately, died before the age of 20, having completed a number of symphonic works, three string quartets, several religious works and a number of cantatas for voice and orchestra. The third movement of his *Sinfonia A Gran Orquesta* contains a jota of Aragon ; while Arriaga's music was Mozartian in style, it was written with a Spanish signature. Non-Spanish composers who captured the feeling of Spain include such greats as the Russian, Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakoff and the Frenchman, Eduard Lalo. Rimsky-Korsakoff brilliantly orchestrated *Capriccio Espanol* ends with a *Fandango Asturiana* while Lalo's *Symphonie Espanol* for violin and orchestra reflects the style of Sarasate's violin music.

A Listening Repertoire : Italian *Music*

Every culture has its own musical traditions. Students of Italian should be aware of two great movements which began in Italy. The first is violin and orchestral literature which were sparked by the invention of the violin in Italy, more than 400 years ago. Second is the opera which began at the palace of Count Bardi, in Florence, around 1600 when a group of musicians and poets known as the "Camerata" tried to capture the spirit of the ancient Greek drama. In doing so, they fashioned a form which was to establish a new tradition. To the Italian, the opera is his "Broadway Show" complete with story, staging, action and music. A unique opportunity awaits the student of Italian in enjoying a great body of literature through his understanding of language. Given the language skill, he or she can grasp the joy of the "Drinking Song" from "La Traviata" the humor of the "Largo al Factotum" from the "Barber of Seville" and the tragedy of "Vesta la Giuba" from "Pagliacci". For the jazz "buff" there is a similarity between the Sextet from "Lucia" by Donizetti and Dixieland in the individual melodies carried by each of the six voices.

A Listening Repertoire: German *Music*

A great treasure of music literature awaits the student of German. To begin, the "lieder" provide poetic stories combined with the melodies of master composers. One of the great melodists of all time, Franz Schubert, wrote a song a day for an entire year during his short lifetime of 31 years. While the 3 B's are considered "heavies" of music, they might perhaps be looked upon in a more kindly light by our students. After all, our young "Rock" musicians who explore different sounds by experimenting with instrumentation are no different from Bach who used a different group of instruments in the solo parts of each one of his Brandenburg Concerti. Beethoven, also a rebel, used chords, which his critics called "dissonant". And Mozart, a close relative of the 3 B's in the "heavy" department used an A flat against an A natural in the "Dissonant" Quartet. Was he saying something to Stan Kenton?

A Listening Repertoire: *French Music*

The French have one advantage over the previous three cultures mentioned i.e., the world's most popular opera, "Carmen" with its colorful bull fighter, soldiers, gypsies and, of course, zestful melodies. In the "Pop" concert field, millions have enjoyed "The Carnival of the Animals" and "Danse Macabre" by Saint Saens as well as "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" by Dukas. Hector Berlioz, the father of modern instrumentation used a harp in a symphony orchestra 100 years before Lucky Strike cigarettes sponsored a harp player on the Saturday Night "Hit Parade". Finally, France was a leader during the period of Impressionism-and the sounds of its masters, Debussy and Ravel are still being used by present day arrangers.

Summary

In articulating music with foreign language study I would submit that a variety of approaches can be applied in or out of school, through participation and listening activities and with the aid of various media. The success of the teacher will depend upon reaching out, hazarding risks, involving pupils and sharing outcomes.

THE SUBJECT OF JEWISH MUSIC

MAX WOHLBERG

Some days ago I was asked to review for "Jewish Bookland", Macy Nulman's *Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music*, (McGraw-Hill, N.Y.) . Of necessity the review had to be a brief one. As a result a number of aspects of the volume of interest to musicians could not be dealt with adequately or even touched upon. What I failed to do there I propose to accomplish on the hospitable pages of this journal.

However, before discussing the book at hand it may be worthwhile to submit a-1 hope useful-prolegomena to the subject.

Jewish Music, on the most obvious and fundamental level, consists of two elements: 1) Liturgical and 2) Secular. Between these two-and related to both-lies a group of Zemirot, Wedding and Hassidic songs (with and without words).

The liturgical part includes : a) Cantillations-with numerous variations-for the Sabbath (and weekdays), High Holidays, the Megillot; b) Nusah for the annual liturgical cycle, consisting of bl) MiSinai tunes and b2) specific musical modes; c) Cantorial recitatives ; d) Congregational tunes ; e) Choral settings and f) Compositions for instruments.

The secular part includes: a) Folk songs (with numerous thematic subdivisions) in various languages; b) Art songs (in Hebrew, Yiddish, English, French, German). Some of these, as well as those in group (a) often utilize musical themes associated with the liturgy ; c) Instrumental music (piano, organ, violin, cello, flute, recorder, string quartet, orchestra). Some of these, at times, may also make use of so-called "traditional" motifs and d) Oratorios, Cantatas and Operas.

Since music played a vital role in our history and since ours was a literary ancestry it was to be expected that through the centuries our literature would reflect our relation to music and describe its role in the life of our people.

We therefore encounter many clear (and some dubious) references to music in the books of the Bible, in the (Babylonian and Jerusalem) Talmud, in Gaonic and medieval responsa as well as in the literature of the modern and contemporary period. Not unexpectedly (since our people did not live in isolation) ancient and recent non-Jewish sources also shed some light on the role and nature of our music.

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While a study of the aforementioned aspects of the subject require primarily a historical-literary approach, a definition or description, of the nature and quality of Jewish music demands a musicological-analytical effort. This latter area of research has understandably been confined to only a few well-equipped scholars.

Far less stringent demands are made on those writing on (not evaluating) the creators and performers (composers, cantors, conductors, singers) of Jewish music.

However, of one attempting a critical evaluation we are justified in expecting competent musicianship, aesthetic sensitivity, unbiased objectivity and, of course, thorough familiarity with the subject.

It seems to me that in an encyclopedia of Jewish music we may rightfully expect to attain a true, clear, over-all view of the significant aspects of the subject, a description of its elements, a pinpointing of its essential characteristics and an evaluation of its high points.

Since the volume we are examining makes claim to be concise we cannot expect it to be exhaustive in any given area but we should expect it to be judicious in its selection of entries and, of course, authentic entries in its information. We also expect some logic and order in its use of references and bibliographies.

It is with these presumptions that I studied Nulman's work and regretfully, found it, uneven, disconcerting, and finally, disappointing.

In its favor are: handsome appearance, legible type, numerous (some, not easily available) musical examples (some, alas, without attribution), many pictorial illustrations and photographs (some, as the one on page 45 should have been dated), adequate coverage on Shofar, Te'amim, Israeli composers and a five-page, "Highlights in the History of Jewish Music" (with some debatable points) placed at the end of the volume.

It's flaws are those of: commission, omission, bibliographies and evaluation. In reference to inclusions: since this book is neither a text book for cantorial students nor an introduction to the liturgy, why was it deemed necessary to include such entries as: Shahrit, Az Yashir, Kabbalat Shabat, Minha, Mahzor, Psalter, Mi Khamokha, Kinot, Megillot, Mathil, Piyut, Pizmon, Ba-al Tefilah, Ba-al Shahrit, Ba-al Musaf, Ba-al Tokeia, Yom Kippur Katan, Hosha-Na, Haggadah, Halleluyah, Akdamut, etc. ?

If any of these have relevance to, say, Nusah, Hazzanut, Cantillations or whatever subject is treated in the work they could have been dealt with in those places. But, in truth, most of those (and

others) have, at best **only** a nebulous relevance to the avowed (concise) purpose of the book.

Reading the entry Ba-al Tefilah (pg. 20), for example, one finds that three fourths of the comments deal with Baer's Ba-al Tefilah. As Baer's biography appears on page 24 would it not make more sense to discuss his work there? Is Wagner's anti-Semitic diatribe ***Das Judenthum In Der Musik*** worthy of a cross-reference (pg. 126) on the selfsame page?

How can one justify entries such as Kolan, Matzil, Kammerton and Stimmgabel all referring to the tuning fork when the inclusion of the latter is in itself unjustified ?

The entry Schulklopper (pg. 126) is informative but why repeat the identical tune of a poem seven times?

One is at a loss to understand the reason for the presence of such entries as: drong (why not also **kalyike?**), Mann Auditorium, brummen, brettel, dirigent, probe, repetitze, concert. And why special headings for reader, oberkantor, char-hazzan, stadt-hazzan and voiceless-hazzan ?

Inexplicably-and with expectedly odd results-the author chose to assign individual headings to titles of some compositions by composers whose biographies may or may not appear in the book. In some cases as, for example, in those of Castelnuovo-Tedesco and Bloch this results in mere duplication. In others, as in the case of Leonard Bernstein, it defies a rational explanation. Bernstein is excluded from the volume but, amazingly, there is an entry: ***Hash-kivenu*** under which heading there is only one setting mentioned. You guessed it-that of Bernstein.

The reasons for Nulman's selecting one or two musical settings from a multitude of settings are difficult to comprehend. Thus, under Psalm 118 we are told to see Min Hammetzar. There, two settings are noted : Halevy, and Tal. Why omit the four more popular settings of Dunajewski ?

Psalm 92 (Tou Lehodot) refers only to the setting of Schubert which-in my opinion-neither adds appreciably to the stature of Schubert nor to the riches of synagogue music. Why not mention-if it has to be done at all-the ***Tov Lehodot*** of Nowakovsky? The ultimate folly, however, is reached at the end of the article on Sulzer. Dispensing with a bibliography the author merely suggests: See ***Psalm 92.***

In regard to compositions by non-Jewish composers it would seem to be more logical to include them under one heading instead of scattering them-by name of composition-throughout the book.

One is truly surprised in seeing the entry: **Judas Maccabeus** (Handel). Why not also **Esther, Athalia, Samson, Joshua, Joseph, Solomon, Deborah, Jephtha, Belshazzar** and **Israel in Egypt**?

Puzzling, indeed, are other inclusions. What purpose does it serve to refer to only one modern setting (Milhaud) of the Shema? Did only Bloch write a First or Second Symphony? Why separate entries for these?

Encountering the entry **Rachem** (a song by Mana-Zucca) is totally unexpected. Rosenblatt—we are informed—made it popular. Using that criteria one may well ask why not **Dos Pintele Yid, Dos Talesil, Oif'n Pripetchok**, Mein **Shtetele Belz** or, indeed, why not **Bei Mir Bistu Shein?** And how about, **If I Were a Rich Man?**

If we now turn our attention to omissions (keeping in mind the inclusion of practically every Israeli musician, excepting Zaira) we are confronted by the puzzling absence of so many prominent American Jewish musicians.

Why are there no entries for Gideon, Copeland, Weisgall, Janowsky, Gottlieb, Diamond and Amram? Why ignore the works of Pickett, Davidson, Eisenstein and others? Aren't the works of these comparable, if not superior, to the works of so many included? One is baffled.

Since the author is director of the Cantorial Training Institute of Yeshiva University, one would expect a more rational or fairer, presentation of cantors in the book. However, one meets with disappointment in this area as well.

Surely Kwartin was a cantor of world-renown but he is ignored as are his famous colleagues: Karniol, Rutman, Roitman, Shteinberg, Katchko, and Ganchoff. Few names are better known in the cantorial world than that of the Kusevitskys but you will look in vain for them.

The author cites a number of times a volume: **Synagogue Music by Contemporary Composers** but fails to mention Cantor Putterman who is responsible for the commissioning of the composers as well as for the publication of the volume. And, are there many cantorial concerts taking place without at least one composition by Alter? But Alter's name is conspicuously absent.

How can one justify the omission of the brilliant, unique, innovative, exciting Leib Glantz? One is simply aghast at such an oversight—if that's what it is. One almost senses a gigantic, fabricated Orwellian deception, an enormous cruel hoax whereby men of talent and achievement are rendered unpersons and are cast into oblivion. It is truly an intolerable miscarriage of justice! If a choice had to be made did not these men outweigh such as, say, Shkuder and Yakovkin?

The author alludes a number of times to his edition of a service by Wassilkowsky but fails to allot space for Wassilkowsky who was a fine scholar, a good musician and a popular composer. Similarly slighted are Semiatin and Zemachsohn.

It is not a pleasant task to find fault in a work which obviously consumed a great deal of time in preparation. However, an examination of the bibliographies provided here are as exasperating as they are ludicrous.

To cite a few examples : As there are some twenty-odd cantillating signs one would expect a note after each one referring the reader to one place (Te-amim, cantillation, accents, Tropes or Ne-imot) where a comprehensive bibliography would be found. Instead, one finds a different bibliography after virtually each sign. Those for Zakef Gadol are not those for Zakef Katon. Some, as Ethnahta, receive none at all. What perverted logic lies hidden here?

Incidentally, after reading the comments on Ta'am Ha-elyon I wonder if the author heard of Miles Cohen's *The System of Accentuation in the Hebrew Bible* and his *The Dual Accentuation of the Ten Commandments*.

Isaac Rivkind's, *Klei-Zmorim* is the only authentic work on the subject. One would never learn of this reading the article, *Klezmer*.

One wishing to acquire more than superficial knowledge of Israeli music will not get it by reading that article. If however, he will stumble on the biography of Smoira-Cohn he will learn of her work : *Folk Song In Israel-An Analysis Attempted*.

One, would surely expect to see Landshut's *Amudei Ha-avodah* after the article on Piyut ; or the works of Prilutzky, Lehman, Cahan, and perhaps: Kipnis, Kotilansky and Belarsky at the end of Folk Songs. By the way, Golub, Posner, Roskin and Lefkovich are also among the missing.

Yeshiva University has published a number of issues of *Talpiyoth*, a quarterly containing scholarly articles on diverse subjects. Among these are a series on ancient musical instruments by Menahem Brayer. Does Nulman know of these articles published by the institution with which he is associated? Apparently not, for they are not included in the bibliography on instruments.

While my comments above attempt to pinpoint a lack of organization, an absence of logic and faulty judgement, my main quarrel with the book lies in its lack of authenticity. This is expressed in misleading statements, wrong emphasis and (I experience difficulty in finding the right adjective) amateurish viewpoint.

I could overlook such useless and inept statements as: "Instruments, Musical. The plural term instruments is used to denote contrivances used specifically in Biblical and post-Biblical days to

produce musical sounds,” and that, “the most common meters (in Folksongs) are: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 6/8”, or such non-sequitor as: “Levy is not universally regarded as the innovator of four-part singing in the Synagogue because according to A. Z. Idelsohn, his work was not traditional but was entirely new”; or such “indispensable” intelligence on Phonograph Record : “Disc, usually measuring 7, 10, or 12 inches in diameter, in whose grooves sound tracks have been engraved.”

Far more serious is, for example, the absence of an entry for Art Song. Such composers as Weinberg, Rosowsky, Gnessin, Milner, Achron, Engel, the Krein brothers, Grad, Kopit, Schalit, Saminsky, Zhitomirsky, Skliar and others have created a magnificent repertory of Art Songs. The reader of this volume will be hard put to discover this hidden treasure.

The words “Art Song” do not appear in the article on Lazar Weiner, the most eloquent contemporary exponent of this musical genre. Yes, it is said that “he is known for his musical settings for original Yiddish texts or translations into Yiddish”. And he wrote “songs”! Incidentally only one of his many liturgical works is mentioned.

This imbalance is noted in other places as well. Thus, the comments on Binder (as on Bugatch) fail to name even one of his liturgical works. On the other hand the notes on Milner name (in addition to, In Cheder) only his **Unsane Tokef**, his only liturgical work, while his preponderant secular compositions remain in obscurity.

The statement of the author (pp. 22, 165) notwithstanding, the **Marshallik** did not disappear in the seventeenth century. I have heard one perform and his name was I believe, Zoldy (Hungarian for Green) and he hailed from Marmaros-Sziget, the hometown of Elie Wiesel who may remember him.

A number of assertions in the book are subject to serious doubt or are, at least, in need of careful qualification. Of these are: East European Melody.. . “is expressed greatly (sic) through improvisation (page 121)”. “Melisma differs from coloratura in being expressive in character.” The equation of Melisma with “niggunim arukhim.”

“The position of Hazzan Sheni evolved because the principal Hazzan was busy with the chor-schul. He composed new music for almost every service and occasion, trained and rehearsed with the four-voiced choir (page 103) ”.

Contrary to the view expressed on page 54, “Amen” was not used as a refrain in the Temple. “Ein Onim Omein Bamikdosh” (Sab. 103 :).

Of Rosowsky's "two-volume" (page 207) *Shirei Tefilah* only the second part ever appeared.

Of interest, particularly to cantors, are Nulman's evaluation of some items pertinent to the cantorate. Thus, to select one case, we consider, "Biography of Cantors." The first to labor in this area was Aaron Friedmann. This three-volume, *Lebensbilder Beruhmter Kantoren* (in German) is a solid work. Volume 3 includes a valuable list of Payetanim-Hazzanim. Nulman's comment on this work is simply "a biographical work on Cantors". Years later Elias Zaludkovsky wrote (in Yiddish), *Kulturtreger Fun Der Yiddisher Liturgie*, mostly based on Friedmann's work and including such an irrelevant journalistic article as, "*Meg A Hazzan uein A Mesader Kiddushin*"? This volume Nulman describes as "an invaluable contribution to Jewish liturgical music study". Curious-at the least.

Since in the case of Zaludkovsky we are given a complete list of the articles he wrote it may be worthwhile to dwell for a moment on one of these : "Unzere Nushaot" which appeared in 1934 in Jacob Beimel's, *Jewish Music Journal*. When I then read the article it struck me as startlingly familiar. In a few minutes I found the article-virtually verbatim-in *Musikalisher Pinkas* of A. M. Bernstein, under the name of Bernstein. I immediately telephoned Beimel and informed him of this blatant example of plagiarism. Beimel frankly and regretfully informed me that he did not know of the existence of the Bernstein work.

With writing of this episode (I have never done so before) I do not wish to denigrate the memory of Zaludkovsky who was a fine cantor and a pleasant person with substantial achievements, nor to belittle the knowledge of my esteemed friend Beimel, but to indicate that one with pretensions to scholarship in a given field must first master all disciplines, then keep abreast of all developing trends pertinent to it. The master must be a perennial student as the term Talmid Hakham indicates: the crucial word is Talmid.

May I add that my own adverse comments do not exhaust all of my objections to the contents of this book but they do reflect my general view of it. Perhaps I expected too much. After all, the literature on the subject is vast. The primary sources are in Hebrew, German, English and Yiddish and to study them all in addition to mastering the art of music is too enormous a task for one individual. Alas, the Idelsohns, Werners and Sendreys do not appear to frequently.

I would suggest that the next such undertaking be a joint effort of two or three men of competence and discernment.

MUSIC SECTION

Among the six million souls lost in the Holocaust was a group of outstanding synagogue composers who created and flourished in the three decades between the two world wars. All six million souls are precious to us, but especially close must be the hazzanim and composers whose creativity was cut off mid-song. Among the hazzanim, the most tragic loss was that of Gershon Sirota, who with full knowledge of what awaited him returned from the safety of American soil to his city, Warsaw, and to his people, to comfort them, to strengthen them and to die with them.

Among the best known composers of that time and place were Itzhak Schlosberg, Saul I.E. Taub, Hazzan A.M. Bernstein and David Eisenstadt. In the Music Section which follows we publish a small sampling of their creativity in the hope that hazzanim will bend every effort to utilize them in their services, to remember them in their prayers and thus to grant them a portion of the eternity they richly deserve.

SR

Andantino

ten.

ה - נה - זי - נו עי - נו - נו שוב - ה - צ - ל - יון א -
 - se - che-ze-no ei - nei - nu b' - 'shuv - cho l' - tzi - Yon b' -

ה - נה - זי - נו עי - נו - נו שוב - ה - צ - ל - יון א -
 - se - che-ze-no ei - nei - nu b' - shuv - cho l' - tzi - Yon b' -

ten.

שוב - ה - צ - ל - יון ל - צ - יון ב' - ר - א - ח -
 - shuv - cho l' - tzi - yon l' - tzi - yon b' - ra - cha -

שוב - ה - צ - ל - יון ל - צ - יון ב' - ר - א - ח -
 - shuv - cho l' - tzi - Yon l' - tzi - yon b' - ra - cha -

CHOIR & CONG.
 ברוך הוא וברוך שמו
 Boruch hu uvoruch sh'mo

מ - ב - ר - ו - ח - א - ת - א - ד - נו
 - mim bo - ruch a - to a - do - noi

Cantor

ה - זי - ר - ה - ק - ח - נו - נ - כ - י - ש - ח - נו - ל -
 ha - ma - cha - zir sh' - chi - no - so - l' -

CHOIR & CONG.

צ - יון
 tzi - yon

א - מ - נ - מ - ד - י - מ - א - נ - א - ח - נו ל - ר
 o - men mo - dim a - nach - nu loch

א - מ - נ - מ - ד - י - מ - א - נ - א - ח - נו ל - ר
 o - men mo - dim a - nach - nu loch

א - מ - נ - מ - ד - י - מ - א - נ - א - ח - נו ל - ר
 o - men mo - dim a - nach - nu loch

D. EISENSTADT

(1890-1 942)

ורארשע

דוד אייזנשטאט

BO' I WESHOLOM

בואי בשלום

טעקסט פון ר' שלמה אלקאבעץ
 מרוזיק: ד. אייזנשטאט

Grandioso

Cant.

בו - אי - בוש - לום - רת - עט - לה - ע - לו
 bo - i v'sho - lom ate - res ba - a - lo

S.

בו - אי - בוש - לום - רת - עט - לה - ע - לו
 bo - i v'sho - lom ate - res ba - a - lo

A.

בו - אי - בוש - לום - רת - עט - לה - ע - לו
 bo - i v'sho - lom ate - res ba - a - lo

T.

בו - אי - בוש - לום - רת - עט - לה - ע - לו
 bo - i v'sho - lom ate - res ba - a - lo

I
B.
II

בו - אי - בוש - לום - רת - עט - לה - ע - לו
 bo - i v'sho - lom ate - res ba - a - lo

S.

בו - אי - בוש - לום - רת - עט - לה - ע - לו
 bo - i v'sho - lom ate - res ba - a - lo

A.

בו - אי - בוש - לום - רת - עט - לה - ע - לו
 bo - i v'sho - lom ate - res ba - a - lo

T. I

בו - אי - בוש - לום - רת - עט - לה - ע - לו
 bo - i v'sho - lom ate - res ba - a - lo


T. II


בו - אי - בוש - לום - רת - עט - לה - ע - לו
 bo - i v'sho - lom ate - res ba - a - lo

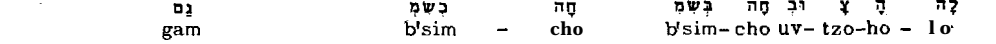
I
B.
II


בו - אי - בוש - לום - רת - עט - לה - ע - לו
 bo - i v'sho - lom ate - res ba - a - lo

Con espressione

C. 
 גַּם בְּשֵׁם קָהּ בְּשֵׁם קָהּ וְיָצַח לָהּ
 gam b'sim - cho b'sim - cho uv- tzo- ho - lo

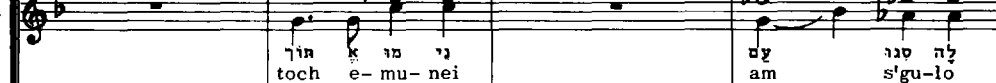
I. 
 גַּם בְּשֵׁם קָהּ בְּשֵׁם קָהּ וְיָצַח לָהּ
 gam b'sim - cho b'sim - cho uv- tzo- ho - lo


II. 

C. 
 תוֹךְ מִי אֵל תוֹךְ עַם לָהּ גֹּדֵס
 toch e- mu- nei am s'-gu- lo

S. 
 תוֹךְ מִי אֵל תוֹךְ עַם לָהּ גֹּדֵס
 toch e- mu- nei am s'-gu- lo

A. 
 תוֹךְ מִי אֵל תוֹךְ עַם לָהּ סִגְוֹלָה
 toch e- mu- nei am s'-gu- lo


I. 
 תוֹךְ מִי אֵל תוֹךְ עַם לָהּ סִגְוֹלָה
 toch e- mu- nei am s'-gu- lo

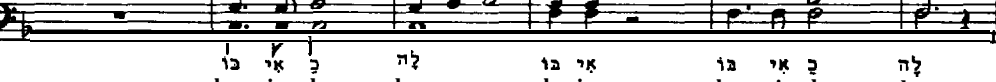
II. 
 תוֹךְ מִי אֵל תוֹךְ עַם לָהּ סִגְוֹלָה
 toch e- mu- nei am s'-gu- lo


 בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ
 bo- i cha - lo bo- i cha - lo bo- i cha - lo


 בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ
 bo- i cha - lo bo- i cha - lo bo- i cha - lo


 בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ
 bo- i cha - lo bo- i cha - lo bo- i cha - lo


 בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ
 bo- i cha - lo bo- i cha - lo bo- i cha - lo


 בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ
 bo- i cha - lo bo- i cha - lo bo- i cha - lo


 בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ בּוֹ אֵי בּוֹ לָהּ
 bo- i cha - lo bo- i cha - lo bo- i cha - lo

A.M. BERNSTEIN (1866-1932)
ווילנע

אברהם משה בערנשטיין

YISMACH MOSHE

ישמח משה

חפלה
מרוזיק: א. מ. בערנשטיין

Cant. *Larghetto*

יש - מ - מח - מ - ש - קו - חל - נת - ה - מ - כי
yis - mach mo - she b' - ma - t' - nat chel - ko ki e - ved

Cant. *p*

לו - ה - רא - ק - מן - א - נ
ne - e - man ka - ra - ta lo

S. A. *p*

יש - מ - מח - מ - ש - קו - חל - נת - ה - מ - כי
yis - math mo - she b' - ma - t' - nat chel -

T. *p*

יש - מ - מח - מ - ש - קו - חל - נת - ה - מ - כי
yis - mach mo - she b' - ma - t' - nat chel -

B. *p*

יש - מ - מח - מ - ש - קו - חל - נת - ה - מ - כי
yis - mach mo - she b' - ma - t' - nat chel -

קו - כי - נד - ע - מן - א - נ - ה - רא - ק - לו
- ko ki e - ved ne - e - man ka - ra - ta lo

mp

ש - ו - ר - א - ב - ר - ת - א - ת - ל - ל - ת - ש - ו - ר - א - ב - ר - ת - א - ת - ל - ל - ת - ש - ו - ר - א - ב - ר - ת - א - ת - ל - ל - ת
k' - lil tif - e - ret be - ro - sho na - ta - ta b' - o - m' - do l' - fa -

ני - סי הר על ה - ני
- ne - cha al har si - nai

תפ ליל - א - רת - רא - שו -
k'lil - tif e - ret b' - ro - sho na -

תפ ליל - א - רת - רא - שו -
k'lil - tif e - ret b' - ro - sho na -

תפ ליל - א - רת - רא - שו -
k'lil - tif e - ret b' - ro - sho na -

ת - ת - ב - צ - ד - נ - על הר סי - ני
- ta - ta b' - o - m' - do l' - fa - ne - cha al har si - nai

ת - ת - ב - צ - ד - נ - על הר סי - ני
- ta - ta b' - o - m' - do l' - fa - ne - cha al har si - nai

ת - ת - ב - צ - ד - נ - על הר סי - ני
- ta - ta b' - o - m' - do l' - fa - ne - cha al har si - nai

ני - ש - ו - ני - חות לו - הו - ני - א - חות לו - הו - ני - ב - ריד - ב - י - דו -
u - sh' - nei lu - chat a - va - nim ho - rid b' - ya - do v' - cha -

ת - ש - רת - סי - ש - הם - חוב -
- tuv ba - hem sh' - mi - rat sha - bat

ני - ש - ו - ני - חות לו - הו - ני - א - חות לו - הו - ני - ב - ריד - ב - י - דו -
u - sh' - nei lu - chat a - va - nim

ני - ש - ו - ני - חות לו - הו - ני - א - חות לו - הו - ני - ב - ריד - ב - י - דו -
u - sh' - nei lu - chat a - va - nim

ני - ש - ו - ני - חות לו - הו - ני - א - חות לו - הו - ני - ב - ריד - ב - י - דו -
u - sh' - nei lu - chat a - va - nim

לָם עוֹלָם -
- rit o - lam

בֵּי-נִי וְעַיִן בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵל-אֹת הִיא אֹת הִיא אֹת הִיא
bei-ni u-vein b'nei yis-ra-el ot hi ot hi l'-o-lam

בֵּי-נִי וְעַיִן בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵל-אֹת הִיא אֹת הִיא אֹת הִיא
bei-ni u-vein b'nei yis-ra-el ot hi l'-o-lam

בֵּי-נִי וְעַיִן בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵל-אֹת הִיא אֹת הִיא אֹת הִיא
bei-ni u-vein b'nei yis-ra-el ot hi l'-o-lam

Stringendo

S.
A.
T.
B.

כִּי שֶׁת-יָמִים אֲשֶׁר אֲדוֹנָי
ki she-shet ya-mim a-sa a-do-nai

שֶׁת-יָמִים אֲשֶׁר אֲדוֹנָי
she-shet ya-mim a-sa a-do-nai

כִּי שֶׁת-יָמִים אֲשֶׁר אֲדוֹנָי
ki she-shet ya-mim a-sa a-do-nai

שֶׁת-יָמִים אֲשֶׁר אֲדוֹנָי
she-shet ya-mim a-sa a-do-nai

et ha-sha-ma - yim v'-et ha - a - retz

et ha-sha-ma - yim v'-et ha - a - retz

et ha-sha-ma - yim v'-et ha - a - retz

et ha-sha-ma - yim v'-et ha - a - retz

et ha-sha-ma - yim v'-et ha - a - retz

et ha-sha-ma - yim v'-et ha - a - retz

בֵּי-נִי וְעַיִן בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵל-אֹת הִיא אֹת הִיא אֹת הִיא
bei-ni u-vein b'nei yis-ra-el ot hi l'-o-lam

כִּי שֶׁת-יָמִים אֲשֶׁר אֲדוֹנָי
ki she-shet ya-mim a-sa a-do-nai

FROM OUR READERS

Dear Professor Wohlberg :

Thank you so much for letting me see your article "Varying Concepts of *Ne'imah* and their Place in the Liturgy" which appeared in the JOURNAL OF SYNAGOGUE MUSIC (December 1974).

It is a splendid piece, one of the best things you've done, and sets one's mind and critical faculties spinning in all sorts of directions.

I have nothing but the highest regard for your semantic and philological dexterity with which you handle the word and concept of *Ne'imah*. Your exposition is truly masterful.

Where I cannot follow you-and this may very well be my fault-is where you rightfully try to reach conclusions from your premises, where in reality you attempt to formulate an *aesthetic* that will hold for Jewish liturgical music and Jewish musical practices. Part of this difficulty stems from the age-old philosophical dichotomy of the "moral" versus the "beautiful", and Jewish music is no more immune to this dilemma than the music of our neighbors.

Further I do not know any statistical evidence that convincingly demonstrates a Jewish preference for the violin over the piano. In fact, Sendrey's *Bibliography* lists almost an equal number of Jewish pianists and violinists. If you are concerned primarily with the folk tradition that is, of course, another kettle of fish (gefilte, of course), and would perhaps be more explicable in sociological and anthropological terms. At any rate, I'm sure you will agree that the slow movements of Mozart's, Schubert's, Schumann's and Chopin's piano music comes as close to your concept of *Ne'imah* as the violin.

The question might also be raised why Jews did not take to the flute in art music in equal numbers-a more "zis" instrument in the terms you have set up would be hard to find.

I would tend to judge the terms "sweetness", "plaintive" and their numerous synonyms in musical practice as purely relative concepts. In other words, to take a simple example close at hand: what would be sweet and plaintive to the Ashkenazim would not necessarily hold true for the Sephardim-and vice versa. Not to speak of other Jewish communities. If you had limited your concept to a more restricted geographical and homogeneous areas, I would be disposed to accept your view more readily-if but still reluctantly.

But enough of my carping and fussing, you have performed a difficult task with skill and imagination, for which again you have my highest regard and admiration.

As ever,
With affection,
Albert Weisser

Professor Wohlberg Replies

Dear Professor Weisser,

I am indebted to you for your gracious comments regarding my article on *Varying Concepts of Ne-imah*. However, I am also most interested by your reservations on some aspects of my article and believe me-delighted that you raised some, entirely valid, points which afford me the opportunity to clarify some items I have left untouched.

As a matter of fact, in retrospect, I would vehemently deny one, unintended, implication readers may derive-not without some justification-from my article. But, first a word regarding my motivation in writing the article. While recalling some historical references to Jewish music I became aware of the surprising frequency with which the word *Ne-imah* appeared and drew-what seems to me-the logical conclusions.

Now to the issues : The preference for violin over the piano may, in my opinion, be attributed to a number of historic reasons :

1. It is the older of the two instruments, hence better known.
2. It is smaller hence more convenient (and safer) for a people often on the move.
3. It is a utilitarian instrument, played at engagements, weddings.
4. Its sound is mellow and closest in timbre, to the human voice (see Apel's Harvard Dictionary of Music)
5. Primarily-because it is homophonic. The traditional Jew is still attracted to homophonic music and hasn't quite gotten used to the sonorities of chords and harmonies.

Our ancestors associated the violin with King David and they sang of "*Dovid Hamelech mit zein fidele*" (*Shofar Shel Moshiach-Goldenfaden*) . Interestingly enough, a number of cantors also cultivated the violin. Among them were Hirsh Weintraub, Israel Lowy (who also played the cello and the piano) and, of course, the master of the Strohfiedel (while not a contemporary violin) was our own Joseph M. Gusikow.

With the arrival of the emancipation we begin to encounter in ever greater numbers first in Jewish salons then in Jewish homes, the pianoforte and Jewish pianists (I have not sought verification for this thesis).

You are, of course, entirely correct in stating that "sweetness" is a relative concept and may not vary with time as well as in different localities. It is also true that I was in the main, thinking of the

Ashkenazic tradition. But, having attended synagogue services of Yemenite, Syrian, Iraquian, Egyptian, Bucharian and other Sephardic communities I am persuaded to believe their underlying predispositions are not unlike ours.

I recall a dialogue of two Yeshiva bachurim: “How come that, although cows are eaten, there are more cows than horses ?”. “That’s simple, horses are stolen”. “But if, say, they are stolen in Pinsk- they are taken to be sold in Minsk, why aren’t there more horses than cows in Minsk?“. You fool, do you for a minute suppose that in Minsk they don’t steal horses?

The preference for sweetness in the near east is, I am convinced, not only culinary.

As to why the flute has not become more popular-I don’t know. However, there are some flutists mentioned in Jewish literature (see my article on Sholom Aleichem). There are also some, albeit weak, literary and musical inferences to the instrument in Jewish songs about shepherds (Goldfaden, Alman, Posner and Olshanetsky) . One of our recent graduates is an excellent flutist.

However, these are minor matters in comparison with the problem of aesthetics and the dichotomy of “moral” versus “beautiful” you so properly emphasize. Let me say as clearly as I can: I abhor the indiscriminate tendency to pursue the vulgar, the “sweet”, the “cute”, the maudlin and the popular.

In the nusach I teach, and in the recitatives I write, I endeavor to maintain a sense of decent propriety, a respect for aesthetics, a sense of dignity and an appreciation of originality. If I were asked for my one word prescription for the music of the synagogue, I would unhesitatingly choose : dignity (while being fully aware that I am not immune to lapses).

But here I come to a matter implied in your letter and incidentally, admirably explored by Judith Eisenstein in the February issue of the *Reconstructionist*, which is one of that has troubled me these many years. I cannot here address myself to the many extremely important elements of the issues raised but, perhaps, I can briefly allude to some of the-to me, frustrating-aspects.

I view the music of the (Ashkenazic) synagogue as consisting of three diverse elements: 1) *Nusach* (traditional modes and melodies; 2) the Hazzanic recitative and 3) Choral (and solo) settings of the liturgy with (or without) instrumental participation.

(Do forgive the personal reference but for my present purpose it is unavoidable.) During my 45 years of uninterrupted service in the cantorate I had, for 12 years, a first-rate (pipe) organ, organist and professional choir with whom I could (and did) perform the

music of Achron, Saminsky, Fromm, Fried, Shalit, Weiner, Binder etc. while not neglecting the “classics” and such traditional men as Gerowitch, Nowakowsky, Birnbaum, Weisser etc.

For another 5 years I had a fair organist (mostly limited to evening services) and a “semi-professional” choir. My repertoire was correspondingly more modest. For approximately 8 years I worked with a volunteer choir (no organ) and the works of contemporary-as well as much of the older composers practically disappeared from my repertoire. During the other 20 years I had (mostly for the High Holidays) either a second-rate (so-called professional group) whose compositions I had to accept, or a volunteer choir with whom I have worked hard and accomplished little. Throughout these years I’ve been exposed to congregational singing of all varieties.

The fate of most of my colleagues in the Conservative cantorate was musically no better-and often worse-than mine. While being aware of the new music being created by young-often talented, occasionally inspired-composers I realized that 1) most of my colleagues simply do not have the musical forces with which to tackle the new music and 2) much of the new music is far too experimental for the average worshipper and is all too often, foreign to the mood of traditional synagogue worship.

Thus, while my aims-within my limitations-were to add authenticity to *Nusach*, musical form to the recitative and some aesthetics to congregational singing. My overwhelming desire was to narrow the gap between the composer and the cantor-performer, a gap that seemed to widen through the years.

That is why, when addressing my colleagues, I encouraged them to widen their musical horizons while I asked the composers to pay some attention to prevalent situations and to give some consideration to the traditional worshipper to whom music in the synagogue is not merely an independent art form but a means to deepen a religious experience.

There is a great deal more than I would have liked to add but I have already proved too loquacious. A French writer, (Pascal?) concluded a rather lengthy letter by saying: forgive the length of this letter but I had no time to write a short one.

With sincere affection,
Max Wohlberg